



TALES FROM THE SWAMP

August 2026

Editor: Kevan Nason, N4XL

Thank you to our group leadership:

President – Ed, K3DNE

Vice President - Dave, WN4AFP

Treasurer – Scott, KG9V

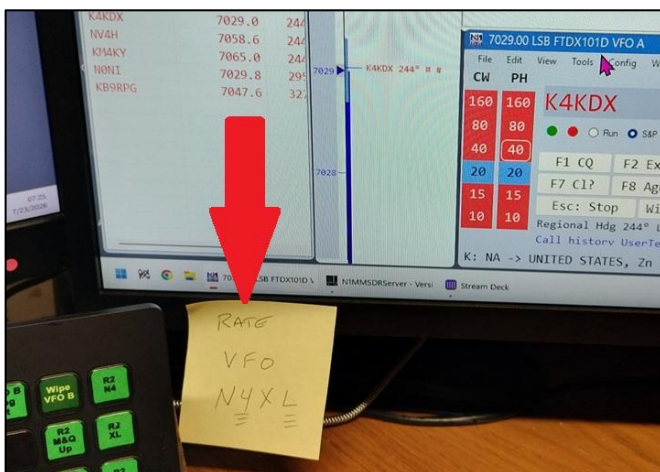
Secretary – Dennis, K2SX

Web Master – Frank, KG4IGC

SFCG Webpage: swampfoxcontestgroup.com

Contest Tips

- Continuous Improvement. Do a post-contest review of what went right and wrong. Document them. Periodically review the list for operator trends. Put two or three short descriptive words of your weaknesses on a yellow sticky and post it during the contest. You will read it several times during the event and remind yourself of what to focus on. As you improve in an area remove that area from your sticky and replace it with another weakness.



Here I have “Rate”, “VFO” and “N4XL” (with the 4 and L underlined) on my sticky note. What do they mean to me?

- Rate – Watch rate. When it drops while switch bands or go to S&P. The same for S&P.
- VFO - Keep the VFO moving when S&P. Only 2 or 3 calls, then move on.
- N4XL – After reviewing my Log Check Reports I noticed I was often confused with stations like N1XL, N3XL,

N4XR, or K4XL. This reminder means carefully listen to the call the Runner comes back to and correct them if needed.

- Everyone has their favorite logging programs and radios that work for them. But like any sport, the top people in our Radiosport hobby naturally gravitate to tools that are best overall suited to perform exceptionally well. For example, None of the top 100 WRTC 2026 contestants used an Icom 706 to contest with and I doubt anyone in the SFCG does either. If for some reason they did they wouldn't expect to place well in any major contest, unless maybe they lived on the ocean in New England and they thought they'd have a chance in the 160-meter Single Op Single Band SSB QRP category. Yet even though the differences between high dollar radios from various manufacturers are becoming less noticeable there are still reasons to buy one radio over another. A yardstick that might serve you well when looking for a new contesting "tool" is to ask what the best in Radiosport WRTC competition are using. If that isn't reason enough to choose one of those rigs you could at least begin comparing them to other radios, seeing what the differences are that are important to you, and then looking around for something you like and can afford (either new or used). Here's what was used in the 2026 WRTC.
 - Elecraft: 43 total radios across 25 stations (primarily K3/K3S and K4 models).
 - Yaesu: 28 total radios across 15 stations (featuring FTDX101, FTDX10, and FTDX5000 models).
 - Icom: 13 total radios across 7 stations (including IC-7610 and IC-7851).
 - FlexRadio: 8 total radios (direct-sampling software-defined setups).
 - SunSDR: 6 total radios.
 - Kenwood: 4 total radios (including TS-590 and TS-890 variants)

A mostly complete list of what was actually used by the top 100 can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/pj2tcuracao/posts/posted-by-alex-ku1cw-radios-used-at-the-recent-wrtc-2026-what-did-the-top-100-co/1331242805658185/>

On a personal note, I'll say that after using K3's and TenTec Orion II's years ago at NQ4I I learned my FT1000MP wasn't as good a radio as newbie tester, me, thought it was. So I bought one, and later a second, TS590. They served me well until I was able to operate from John K4NDX's contest station here in South Carolina and use an IC7610, K4, and FTdx101. It became clear to me after time in front of them that the TS590 was getting long in the tooth and it was again time to upgrade. So... A 7610 or a 101? After finding a very good price on a 101 it sits in my shack and I'm finding the upgrade was worth it. The improvement is noticeable. Maybe you should consider an upgrade too? Just remember that no radio is perfect. They all have their strengths and weaknesses.

Continuing with the theme of what the best are using here is a breakdown of their logging programs:

- N1MM+: 50% of the field
- DXLog: 32% of the field (used by six of the top 10 teams)
- Win-Test: 12% of the field
- WriteLog: 4% of the field (2 teams)
- SDC: 2% of the field
- Skookum: 2% of the field
- TRLinux: 2% of the field

Despite being a very happy N1MM user for many years I have been very interested in the climbing popularity of DXLog. Notice it was used by 6 of the top 10 teams. That is a pretty good endorsement. Those who know me might think it akin to heresy, but I'm thinking of

giving it a try. Perhaps a SFCG member who has used both could comment about the pro's and con's for us? Either on the reflector or write a short article for this newsletter? John W4IX? You mentioned in a 3830 post you are using it.

- (From this point on information came from the now defunct Contesting Wiki pages)

The Mid-Latitude Trough and its HF Propagation Effects

By Frank Donovan, W3LPL (reprinted with his permission from the PVRC Newsletter)

We often experience brief European openings on 40 meters at night as the solar flux drops as we approach solar cycle minimum. This same phenomenon also causes the sudden loss of propagation on the higher bands as night-time arrives over the north Atlantic and north Pacific. It also causes the disappearance of our sunrise opening to Japan on 20 meters. The loss of propagation that often (but not always) impacts north Atlantic and north Pacific night-time propagation is caused by an electron depletion region in the F layer ionosphere known as the mid-latitude trough. The mid-latitude trough is primarily a night-time phenomenon that occurs almost exclusively during the winter and the equinoxes. Summer occurrences are very rare. The pole-ward wall of the mid-latitude trough is bounded by the low-latitude boundary of the auroral region. The width of the mid-latitude trough is typically five degrees or more, extending towards the equator from its pole-ward boundary with the aurora. During the night, the equator-ward edge of the mid-latitude trough steadily drifts to lower latitudes. The mid-latitude trough disappears by re-ionization when the sun rises over that part of the ionosphere.

During the onset of increased geo-magnetic activity, the low-latitude edge of the auroral region rapidly shifts towards the equator. Consequently, the entire mid-latitude trough also shifts toward lower latitudes and propagation to Europe and Japan is likely to fail completely.

What does this mean for upcoming ARRL DX contests? 40 meter propagation to Europe on 40 meters will be best during the hours near our sunset. Propagation to northern Europe will fade away within an hour or two after sunset, and only the southern tier of Europe may be workable by as early as 0100Z. Europe will often fade away by 0200Z, except for skew paths toward the south-east and south. On many (but not all) nights, propagation will return briefly during the hours near European sunrise, as the mid-latitude trough is re-ionized by the sun. Propagation to Europe will last longer into the night in North Carolina and Virginia than it does in New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Similarly, 15 meters will lose propagation to Europe shortly after European sunset, and 20 meters will lose propagation to Europe soon thereafter. On paths to Japan, direct path 40 meter propagation towards the northwest is unlikely except for a very brief period at 0800Z (Japanese sunset) and during the hour so around 1130-1230Z (our sunrise). During the remaining hours, propagation to Japan will be over the familiar (to 40 meter DXers) southwest skew path.

On 15 and 20 meters, evening openings to Japan will be brief, beginning shortly after 2130Z (sunrise in Japan) , and failing shortly on 15 meters after our sunset and soon afterwards on 20 meters. The morning 20 meter direct path openings to Japan we've become used to on 20 meters during high sunspot years will be only a distant memory as the mid-latitude trough kills that path during the Japanese night-time hours.

The mid-latitude trough can be very beneficial on long haul 160 meter paths at sunrise on the eastern end of the path. Ionospheric tilts occur in the vicinity of the trough, occasionally

producing tremendously enhanced 160 meter propagation at our sunrise on our path to Japan. I've experienced several JA sunrise openings when the JAs are an honest "20 meter S9". It's amazing to listen to their S3 signals build up to S9 over about a 5 minute period, stay at that strength for 10-15 minutes, then steadily fade away as absorption takes over with the rising sun. On those occasions I've had runs of 20 or more JAs on 160, just as on 10 meters when propagation is good. Fig 1.6

at <http://www.radtelnetwork.com.au/propagation/hfprop.htm> shows an illustration of the MUF at the mid-latitude trough. Although the article says the mid-latitude trough occurs at 60 degrees north and latitude, recall that it's occurs during winter and in the vicinity of the equinoxes, so you would rarely experience a mid-latitude trough simultaneously at both north and south latitudes.

As we approach solar minimum, we should be prepared for shorter openings over the north Atlantic and north Pacific paths. Knowledge of propagation phenomenon will be more of a strategic advantage than during the high sunspot cycle, as openings become more fleeting. Operators who are aware of these patterns will be less likely to be disappointed by missed opportunities.

CSFCG Picnic at K4NDX



Dear SFCG Members,

It's time to celebrate the change of seasons and enjoy some great food, fellowship, and ham radio camaraderie!

Please join us for the **Swamp Fox Contest Group Fall Picnic BBQ** at the **K4NDX Superstation** in **Fort Mill, SC**, on **Sunday, September 27th**, from **12:00–3:00 PM**.

Bring a side dish to share and come ready for a relaxing afternoon with your fellow Swamp Foxes.

Please RSVP by September 15th.

Sign up here >>>>

September Picnic RSVP

We hope to see you there!

73,
Scott - KG9V

Frank KG4IGC is Ill

Ted K7OM posted, "I just talked to Sarah, wife of Frank KG4IGC, and she told me he is in the hospital. They have run lots of tests but so far have not found the cause of his current illness. She said she will have him moved to another hospital tomorrow or next day if things don't change." It was later reported Frank has had pain over most of his body and hasn't been able to walk without support. Last heard he has been moved to rehabilitation. Please keep Frank and Sarah in your thoughts and prayers.

From the Reflector:

- Frank KG4IGC wrote this in reply to a request for NAQP RTTY team members. "Ed, I took a bad power surge (continuous brownouts took out my PC) during 13 Colonies had some recent computer problems but I am working on getting things back up and running and a couple of safeguard upgrades. I am going to try to be on the air for the NAQP RTTY and also W1AW/4, but still have some testing of equipment before I can fully commit. If you want, put me down as part time, and I will do my best to be at the party depending on how things go."
- Dave NJ4F replied, "Many years ago I had a PC power supply ruined by a series of power surges from brownouts. I built a relay box. A relay energizes a contactor which applies power to a series of outlets, to which my computer, radios, etc. are connected. The relay is powered continuously from voltage on the secondary side of the contactor. A momentary NO push button switch energizes the relay, causing it to close, putting voltage to the secondary side, which then keeps the relay energized. Of course there is a switch in the relay circuit to power it off when needed. This way, if power drops even for a second, the relay will lose voltage, severing power to the outlets. And it will not power back up until I hit the switch. I have been using this same relay box for 40 years, and I think it has saved my equipment numerous times."
- It is fun to watch how our fellow SFCG members and Team mates are doing during contest. The Contest Online Scoreboard is being used by more and more of us, but it requires you to check some things before the contest. Frank KG4IGC wrote, "If you use the Contest online scoreboard, don't forget to log in and change your team name to Swamp Fox Contest Group in your profile settings." That isn't always exactly true since sometimes we have several teams for a contest, but whoever organizes the teams will put out which team you are in. If you don't update what your profile says it will use whatever you last used which is probably the wrong team name.
- Ted K7OM wrote about the NAQP RTTY - I could not try 160m as that antenna is "history". Maybe someone down in the southern part of the state can help him out?
- We've been having great Team participation Thanks! As an example we had three teams in the NAQP CW.
- See the Post Contest article below.
- Tony K4AMA revamped the SFOTA website. Great job Tony! Thanks. One very useful feature is a feature to handle slightly different names for the same contest. Tony wrote, "On the issue of duplicate contests/events, if and when they occur, there is a one click 'merge'

option now. Moves any scores in the duplicate event to the event of choice and then removes the duplicate event... nice and simple.” There is also an Add New User option.

- Kevan N4XL and John W4IX used the RBN’s Spot Analysis Tool to compare 40 meter antenna signal strength. If you aren’t aware of that tool you should take a look at it.
- Ed K3DNE gave up contesting from SC to visit Alaska with his XYL. He obviously needs to get his priorities straight.
- Ed K3DNE let everyone know the 2026 CQ WPX CW results are available at <https://www.cqwpw.com/results/> . Take a look. If you did well give us a brag posting on the reflector.
- Kevan N4XL read the rules before the NAQP SSB contest and noted self-spotting was allowed for that one if you are assisted. Since there spots in SSB contests aren’t made as often as they used to you have an advantage by spotting yourself instead of waiting for others. Ed K3DNE even made a post saying it was allowed. Of course, Kevan forgot that for most of his NAQP SSB contest time. Doh!
- Kevan N4XL mentioned if you have a FTdx101, and probably a FTdx10 and other recent Yaesu rigs, you should record your .wav files and internal voice memory files without being processed. That is because audio files played from your logging program or from those internal memories are processed. You don’t want to double-process your messages.
- In post #33339 Bob W1RPG described how he recorded numbers and letters for N1MM to use when voicing call signs. It’s work, but Kevan N4XL mentioned how N1MM also now has the ability to use your own voice and a Text-To-Speech logging feature to avoid all that which results in much smoother call sign voicing that is hardly different from actually voicing calls live yourself.
- Thank you Dave WN4AFP for nationally working on the SCQP. Dave let us know the 2026 results are available at <https://scqso.com/> .
- Being curious of how I did in the SCQP and being consistent with what I said about posting your brag score results I noticed your truly, Kevan N4XL, placed #1 in the Single Op LP Mixed Mode category. I noticed some other current and past SFCG members highlighted in yellow too (#1 in their category).
- With some help from his XYL Ed K3DNE was able to get his inverted-vee’s back up in time for the NAQP SSB.
- John W7WZ let us know fairly rare Franz Josef Land RI1FJL will be QRV in a couple weeks. It might give you an ATNO.
- Dave WN4AFP thinks we are all getting old and forgetful. I think he’s right, but don’t remember what forgetful means. Anyway, he reminded us to check the expiration date on our Ham licenses. Interestingly enough this topic was also mentioned at my last monthly local Ham club meeting. An elderly Ham mentioned he had waited until the last minute and was having trouble navigating the latest hassle laden computer path to renewing his.
- Several Foxes talked about being entertained by Chuck N7MZW’s immediate feedback to testers who don’t meet up to his standards. Herschel KA2G was less critical than Chuck saying CB jargon doesn’t bother him as long as both ops can quickly and accurately pass information.

Articles Wanted

From who? From You!

Retired? Need a project to get you away from TV reruns of Andy Griffith or Real Housewives of Antarctica? Write an article for the rest of us. Doesn't have to be anything fancy. Some worry they don't have enough "smarts" to write something. If it's something you learned, did, read about... Whatever. If it caught your interest then odds are someone else would like to hear about it too. Most of us in the Group aren't technical experts and wouldn't understand the details that would interest a professional Electrical Engineer Ham anyway. Notice I practice what I preach. You won't find much written by that has much math, measurements, and such. But if you have such knowledge and would like to share such, I'm sure some of us would like to hear such things too. I would. I like to learn new things.

Post Contest Comments

Comments come from many Reflector posts and were consolidated by Kevan N4XL

It's a great thing that after the contests Operators are writing more about their experiences. That is both a great reminder for them when preparing for the next one and also undoubtedly helpful to the rest of us too. If you haven't been, it's worth mining people's 3830 contest comments and Lessons Learned posts to pick out those gold nuggets of info that can improve your score. Here are some excerpts.

- John W4IX.
Saturday morning, I decided to put up another receive antenna to the NW. I did not have another beverage box or grounding rods, so I just used a 100ft ground wire on the feed side and terminated to a wire fence post on the other end. I was surprised that it actually worked good enough to hear some stuff I most likely wouldn't hear with the NE Bev or Xmit antenna.
- Andy AA5JF
I started off very rusty, and it felt like I needed more than the usual 30 or 60 minutes to get in the groove. (Editor's Note: Maybe the practice tool Dave WN4AFP found could help the rusty part. It's talked about in the Observations by the Editor section below)
- Kevan N4XL
Like WPX contests se should run as much as possible in domestics and let the mults come to us. S&P after we build up a good score or use SO2V/SO2R to pick up mults in between running CQ's/Q's. I knew this but forgot it. I spent too much time doing my normal DX contest tactics of S&P first before running. John W4IX wasn't on the Contest Online Scoreboard so couldn't watch him but watching Andy I noticed his Q count was higher than mine early on which made his mults later in the contest worth more. Looking him up on the RBN I noticed he was running more than I was.
- John W4IX
I almost dropped out after 5 hours. Looking forward to the Fall Contest Season at K4NDX!!

(Editor: Why include that? John stuck it out and ended with a claimed 8th place SO Assisted Category.)

- Kevan N4XL

Kevan noted that even though today's rigs have great noise reduction systems resulting in the sound of CW stations not changing much you had to be less aggressive employing noise reduction during SSB contests. High levels of noise reduction can make it difficult to copy marginally copyable stations by distorting how the voice sounds.

Observations by the Editor:

- I'm doing frequent CW and typing practice using the great Callsign Training Platform that Dave WN4AFP told us about on the reflector. Are you? It also does SSB calls but I figure doing the other two is helping me with SSB contests. <https://cw4ever.eu/trainer/>

Callsign Training Platform
Developed by CTIILT · CR6K – 2026
Built for Contesting Performance

Operator login
Your callsign: N4XL
Your name: TOM
Use true callsign, fake calls get blocked
Let's go! Let's get better at this!
The callsign and name are stored in this browser and sent with each score.

Current version
Latest public release of the Callsign Training Platform.
Version 2.5.8
Last update: 06/07/2026 23:41

Ranking
Typing SSB CW
1 min 3 min 5 min 10 min
Refresh ranking
Search attempts
Search callsign or DXCC prefix
Continents: ALL EU NA SA AS OC AF
Attempts per callsign: 1 3 5

#	Flag	Call	Name	Score	WPM	Acc	Date / Time	Log
1	🇺🇸	KL9A	N6MJ...	5261	40.8	100%	22/06/20, 14:51:17	View
2	🇩🇪	W0AAE	Kees	4916	38.2	99...	20/06/20, 22:46:14	View
3	🇺🇸	N5NU	Jason	4684	37.4	99...	02/07/20, 21:40:56	View

Latest updates
Date Update

Statistics:
ATTEMPTS WORLDWIDE: 24,568
UNIQUE CALLSIGNS: 1,372
TOTAL TRAINING HOURS: 519.6
ATTEMPTS IN LAST 24 HOURS: 549

- A new online rig comparison tool is available for ARRL members. It lists several parameters a piece of equipment has that Hams might be interested in and gives a side-by-side comparison chart. Filters allow sorting by various categories such as Base Station, Handheld Mobile for radios; amplifier, receiver, transmitter or transceiver; HF, SHF, UHF, or VHF; and mode or digital capabilities. The web page title implies data comes from the monthly QST Product Reviews from 2012 to present. While I wouldn't choose a rig only from data presented it does present another source of information for Hams to consider when looking to purchase a new piece of equipment for their shack.
- A discussion of using computer generated voicing for SSB contests prompted this contest from Bob W1RPG, "I can see it now. In the future, just turn the rig on, software will run the entire contest. You can have time to relax." Bob, I want to make clear I value your opinion and mean absolutely no disrespect by this next. I think it is worthy of discussion though. Discussion is usually a good thing in that information is exchanged.

The first thing I thought of when I read his comment was similar opinions about such things as Assisted operation, using a keyboard to send CW and voice messages, and using a keyboard/mouse to jump to signals instead of using your hand and ears to tune them in by

turning the VFO. Having started contesting as “A boy and his radio” person I went through that too. But here’s a very quick overview of how I came to change my personal opinion and operating style in answer to the many people who don’t like how radio has changed over the years. First, I recognize it won’t be long before a fully automated station is on the air. I hear some already are and some that could be highly competitive may be here in a year or two. But I contest for myself, not for what others do. My limits on what is acceptable will always require my body to be present and physically initiating, evaluating exchanged information, and logging each contact. Now why I’ve adopted automation...

- As a 100 watt station with my highest antenna barely at 50 ft I have far more fun contesting using “crutches” than I do beating my head against the pileup wall trying to get through the HP folk with two or three 100+ foot towers. Since contesting is about fun and I learned how to do all the controversial stuff mentioned above at a very competitive Multi-Multi Super Station manned by world recognized top operators it seemed okay and acceptable to use those tools to have more fun. If you want to be at all competitive the days of “A boy and his radio” have been over for decades.
- Like many, I have physical ailments. As once again proven by my latest NAQP CW contest last week I am unable to spend more than a few hours BIC reaching over to the radio to turn the VFO or tweak controls. My shoulder and arm won’t let me do it anymore. The “crutches” mentioned above allow me to enjoy many more BIC hours than I otherwise could. Me being BIC gives other stations more fun too.
- Computerized voicing would have been a boon to Dave WN4AFP when he sat through the night in a contest with his ailing mother sleeping in the other room. He isn’t alone in that “need”. It is certainly mandatory for Jamie NS3T who lost his voice and uses past recordings from his broadcasting career to do SSB contests. I worked him last weekend and voicing has become so realistic I wouldn’t have known he wasn’t talking if I didn’t know his back story. I once tried to contest while sick too. Same thing. And again, getting older I am able to spend much more BIC time than I used to by using recorded .wav files, and soon to use Text-To-Speech AI type computerized voicing. And as previously mentioned, more BIC time is good for me and other contestants – whether they use computer voicing or not.

Again, I mean no disrespect to Bob or anyone else who doesn’t like such things as modern technology allows. As said, I too have my limits of what I think is right. So it’s a measure of degree, not of total disagreement, with the opinion of others on what Radiosport is.

- Most of us Foxes know pain is an unwelcome companion that comes along when there is no longer room for all the candles on the cake. Some may consider this TMI (Too Much Information) but I give it for a reason that might help others. A major problem keeping me from spending hours Butt-In-Chair has been nerve issues in my upper left thigh causing groin pain. When pain shots began lasting only weeks instead of months my doctor suggested an alternative treatment to consider. A Sprint Peripheral Nerve Stimulator system (PNS). A tiny wire lead was inserted alongside the involved nerve from which gentle electrical pulses are emitted. They, in layman’s terms, train the brain to ignore the constant pain signals coming from the affected area. You control the pulse strength with a small device and keep the level just below the point where they themselves cause you more pain than is already there. I’m nearing the end of the 60-day insertion period and am happy to report I rarely feel groin pain anymore and have spent many more hours BIC than I was doing prior to its insertion. The longest period in the chair so far was a 10-hour NAQP, but

during it I never thought about pain from the leg at all. The PNS will be coming out in two weeks, but the Technician said they have had reports of pain being abated for up to a year after removal and consider a six-month pain free period to be a successful treatment. Besides, hopefully having a few months of being mostly pain free my doctor hopes another advantage of the device is the break will allow my body to respond better to pain shots when they are inevitably resumed. There are still possible rare issues with the PNS wire removal, but my main complaint has been having the signal device taped to my chest for two months has caused minor skin irritation – which I'll gladly take since that is far superior to shooting pains going into my groin! I have not experienced any HF/VHF RF interaction either from the device to my radios or from my radio transmissions causing unexpected changes to the stimulation signal. The Technician reported the PNS can be used in other portions of the body, with a common use being for lower back pain. Of course, Your Mileage May Vary, but I have been very happy with it. Now... since I can sit in the chair again it's time to address the problems I'm having with each of my shoulders.

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.)

1. Add "New Default Skin (Dark)" as Manage skins option (Coded by N1MM) Added New Default.skin to full installer and update installer scripts (Coded by N1MM)
2. Entrywindow Title Bar: Only display WavDir string in phone mode.
3. Fixed many Run Time Errors
4. Tom N1MM has implemented code to support an Ulanzi D100H knob. The device sits on your desktop and has programmable buttons to send CAT codes for specific radio control actions and a knob to change frequencies. The knob has variable tuning rates depending on how fast you turn it. It can be used to either control your local or remote radio and N1MM actions. A Bluetooth connection is required. Follow the initial threads on the device include <https://groups.io/g/N1MMLoggerPlus/message/102496> and a much longer thread begins at <https://groups.io/g/N1MMLoggerPlus/message/102324>.
5. Entry Window: Clicking on the Edit button in the action button row edits the last QSO when the callsign box is empty. If there is a QSO in process, do not open the QSO edit window. (Coded by K3CT)
6. Sending Serial Number: Additional old/new serial number change. If a radio is not connected, the manual radio frequency hasn't changed, and the user edits the QSO that was justlogged, extend the timer that determines if the old or new serial should be sent. (Coded by K3CT)
7. Updates to the Spectrum Window include:
 - a. SDR Server: Reworked the internal timing engine so spectrum updates are paced more precisely and consistently (Coded by N1MM*)
 - b. Spectrum: Fixed a possible freeze if Frequency Bins is ever set smaller than the display width (Coded by N1MM*)

- c. Spectrum: Waterfall no longer waits on the spectrum chart to redraw, so it keeps updating smoothly even when the chart is busy (Coded by N1MM*)
 - d. Spectrum: Waterfall cursor bars now wait 3 seconds after the mouse stops moving before settling onto the radio frequency, instead of snapping back the instant the cursor leaves the window. Wait is terminated by a change in radio frequency. (Coded by N1MM*)
- Ops with amplifiers often want their radio to remember output power for each band. Some radios do not do that. VK4TUX gave a good idea for N1MM users. "Program band-change macros in contest/logging software (such as N1MM Logger+ or Logger32) to send a specific Yaesu RF Power CAT command immediately following a band change." I did not know of a way to directly do that and neither does Google AI, but Google had a suggestion. "External Automation: Many operators use auxiliary utility tools like AutoHotkey or Node-RED to monitor frequency changes via polling and inject the required serial/CAT stream externally." VK4TUX uses Node-RED to perform that action. Since I don't use an amplifier, Node-Red, or AutoHotKey I leave the details those of you with that need. Another method that occurred to me that might be possible is to have N1MM send a UDP broadcast to an external program or device which can then send a command to the radio. Please post it on our reflector if you do. For Node-Red users, VK4TUX can be reached on the FTDX101D@groups.io reflector (see post #23743) or ask me to see if he will give a way to put the two of you in touch. Keep in mind you might also need a method to share your radio COM ports if you do this. A less desirable way would be to put CAT commands for each band's power level in the programmable button slots at the top of N1MM's Band Map or in your Stream Deck and manually punch the button after changing bands, but that is obviously less desirable.
- Mek SQ3RX has released a beta version of a new contest recording program called QSOCapture. It competes with QSOOrder, but Mek claims it has a dashboard making it easy to play, filter and see details of your contest QSO's. He says to "Feel free to test it out." Program band-change macros in contest/logging software (such as N1MM Logger+ or Logger32) to send a specific Yaesu RF Power CAT command immediately following a band change."

You can find all the details on GitHub page:

<https://github.com/sq3rx/QSOCapture>

You can download latest release here:

<https://github.com/sq3rx/QSOCapture/releases/tag/v0.1.0beta>

SOCapture: Key Features 

- Smart Logging: Automatic QSO slicing (pre/post-roll) via N1MM+ UDP. 
- Continuous Recording: Time-sliced storage so you never miss a contact. 
- Dual-Source Support: ExpertSDR (TCI) or standard system soundcard. 
- SO2R Ready: Independent stereo/mono recording for RX1 and RX2. 
- Web Dashboard: Easy browsing, filtering, and playback of your files.

- Besides your Function Key files some others you probably want to update before a contest, be it domestic or international, are the wl_cty.dat and the Super Check Partial (SCP) files. The easiest way to do that is from the Tools menu. There you will find "Download and Install latest country file (wl.cty.dat)" and "Download and Install Latest Check Partial file (master.scp)" I don't know if once you've downloaded them they automatically assign themselves to your current contest, but even if the program is "supposed" to do that I manually assign them anyway.

What do they do? The wl_cty.dat file translates prefixes into specific countries, CQ zones, and ITU zones to track multipliers. The Super Check Partial presents calls to you from a list of known active testers (active in the last year or two). Those calls appear in a window and gives you an aid to help pull out call signs when they are very weak or there is heavy QRM/QRN. Note the direct way under the tool menu gives you the master.scp file which are calls from the entire world, but if you are in a domestic test like the NAQP or a State QSO party you don't normally want to see your Super Check Partial window cluttered up with international call signs because so few DX stations enter those contests. Likewise for a contest where we can only work DX I don't want to see US stations. Besides the master file, the website <https://www.supercheckpartial.com/> has calls broken out for only US/VE, DX, or only Sweepstakes calls. Before each contest I manually download the appropriate file and manually install it. Be careful though. That website has both *.scp and *.dta files. Only the *.scp files work with N1MM.

People have sometimes told me using the Super Check Partial window is cheating. I used to think so too. But then it occurred to me that

- 1) You still have to get the correct call from the other station. You risk penalties if you just pull a call from the window thinking you have the correct call. When it is hard to copy someone I reference the list and use it to throw out the call of who I think it might be and listen for a "Roger Roger Roger!" ~and~
- 2) Since use of the SCP is legal, getting on my high moral horse and saying "That isn't contesting" doesn't hurt anyone but me. The SCP really does help you put hard to copy stations in the log. My competitors are using it. If I elect not to then I am giving them an advantage over me and their scores will be higher. It's kind of like you are entering a car race where you are allowed to use any car found on your local car dealer's lot. Your competitor chooses a Dodge Charger and for some personal moral reason you choose a Kia Soul. Odds are the other guy is going to place better in the race than you are.

Upcoming Contests:

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

SFOTA Current Leaderboard:

As of 8/19/2026

RANK	CALL	CONTESTS	CW	SSB	DIGITAL	RTTY	TOTAL
1	WB4HRL	227	12282	237	206	548	13273
2	KE4EA	121	8175	1221	2	0	9398
3	WN4AFP	25	5126	2758	7	0	7891
4	K1ZZI	62	6627	629	0	0	7256
5	K3DNE	13	561	4830	431	0	5822
6	WB3X	48	3848	1859	0	0	5707
7	K4QQG	44	25	3803	465	196	4489
8	K4FT	64	3962	26	0	274	4262
9	NV4T	51	24	2219	217	439	2899
10	KZ3P	40	992	1352	29	186	2559
11	K4AMA	52	1550	652	9	19	2230
12	KD4S	32	1425	114	61	575	2175
13	N4XL	9	1266	899	0	0	2165
14	WR4W	30	1252	339	0	485	2076
15	KA2G	11	0	1156	854	0	2010
16	KG4IGC	10	333	131	0	1320	1784
17	K7OM	14	932	0	0	824	1756
18	W4ANT	32	640	831	81	150	1702
19	K2SX	7	1610	0	0	0	1610
20	KS4YX	4	228	0	0	904	1132
21	N4QI	33	807	288	0	0	1095
22	WA4LDU	33	59	524	159	98	840
23	NJ4F	2	0	0	0	465	465
24	NI7R	4	455	6	0	0	461
25	W1RPG	5	0	301	0	0	301
26	N2OG	2	0	165	0	0	165
27	WA2BCK	1	25	0	0	0	25
28	KS4VJ	3	0	0	20	0	20

3830 Activity:

NOTE: Data was pulled Saturday 8/15/2026 before the NAQP SSB was completed. Results of that weekend's contest will be in next month's newsletter.

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
1010SumSSB				
08/02/26	K4QQG	Single Op	HP	7
222Up				
08/05/26	WA4LDU	Single Op	LP	1,777
AIQP				
07/26/26	K1ZZI	SOCW	HP	580
07/26/26	K4FT	SOCW	LP	126
07/26/26	K4QQG	SOSSB	HP	32
07/26/26	KD4S	SOCW	HP	140
07/27/26	KE4EA	SOMixed	HP	84
07/27/26	KZ3P	SOMixed	LP	252
07/26/26	N2ZZ	SOMixed	HP	480
07/26/26	N4QI	SOCW	LP	16
07/26/26	NV4T	SOMixed	HP	338
07/26/26	WA4LDU	SOMixed	LP	48
07/26/26	WB3X	SOMixed	LP	1,156
07/26/26	WB4HRL	SOMixed	HP	340
ARS FOBB				
07/27/26	WR4W	Home	QRP	12
CQWW VHF Dig				
07/19/26	AA5JF	SOAB	HP	44,544
07/19/26	KA2G	SOSB/6	LP	27,051
07/20/26	KD4S	SOSB/6	HP	2,967
07/19/26	W4ANT	SOSB/6	HP	4,560
IOTA				
07/26/26	K4QQG	SO12SSB	HP	14,210
07/26/26	NV4T	SO12SSB	HP	1,332
MDC QP				
08/12/26	KE4EA	Fixed	HP	4
08/09/26	KZ3P	Fixed	LP	120
NAQP CW August				
08/02/26	AA5JF	Single Op Assisted	LP	154,054

08/02/26	K1ZZI	Single Op Assisted	LP	101,268
08/02/26	K4FT	Single Op	LP	18,060
08/02/26	K7OM	Single Op Assisted	LP	18,180
08/02/26	KE4EA	Single Op Assisted	LP	3,105
08/02/26	N4IQ	Single Op Assisted	LP	148,074
08/02/26	N4XL	Single Op Assisted	LP	146,376
08/02/26	NI7R	Single Op	LP	11,076
08/02/26	NN4SS	Single Op	LP	18,128
08/02/26	W4ANT	Single Op	LP	1,820
08/02/26	W4IX(@W4IXZ)	Single Op	LP	199,614
08/02/26	WB3X	Single Op Assisted	LP	41,140
08/02/26	WB4HRL	Single Op Assisted	LP	11,016
08/08/26	WN4AFP	Single Op Assisted	LP	8,487
08/02/26	WR4W	Single Op Assisted	LP	2,030
NAQP RTTY July				
07/19/26	K4QQG	Single Op	LP	2,088
07/20/26	K7OM	Single Op	LP	10,686
07/19/26	KG4IGC	Single Op Assisted	LP	14,450
07/19/26	KS4YX	Single Op	LP	6,032
07/19/26	NV4T	Single Op	LP	9,170
07/19/26	WB4HRL	Single Op	LP	6,180
NAQP SSB August				
08/16/26	K1ZZI	Single Op	LP	13,502
08/16/26	K3DNE	Single Op Assisted	LP	109,641
08/16/26	K4QQG	Single Op Assisted	LP	9,516
08/16/26	KA2G	Single Op Assisted	LP	16,000
08/16/26	N4XL	Single Op Assisted	LP	43,500
08/16/26	W1RPG	Single Op Assisted	LP	1,995
08/16/26	W4ANT	Single Op Assisted	LP	10,540
08/16/26	W4IX	Single Op Assisted	LP	123,900

08/16/26	WB3X	Single Op Assisted	LP	20,097
SARTG				
08/16/26	NV4T	SOAB	LP	17,160
WAE CW				
08/10/26	K1ZZI	Single Op	HP	58,838
08/10/26	K7OM	Single Op	HP	4,200

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73 es QRT de N4XL