



September 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

- The following tips come from the 2015 PVRC ARRL DX Contest Cookbook. Caveats: This is for the PVRC which is further north than us and their propagation is different than ours. It was written for 2015. That was 11 years ago but think about the length of the sunspot cycle. (Think about length of the sunspot cycle). It is mainly for the ARRL DX contest. Having said those things, there are still many great tips in that book that apply to us here in South Carolina no matter what the year or contest. And this was written primarily for CW ops, but again many tips apply to all.

- “Marketing and Presentation:” Calling CQ

Like a fast food drive through, your customers want a quick transaction. I’ve been amazed at the professionalism of the European contesting cadre. They get in and get out quickly and don’t mess around. Here’s what works for me:

1. Call short 1X1 CQ’s. “TEST KODQ”
2. Set the automatic CQ interval at 2.3 seconds and repeat 4 or 5 times.
3. If no takers, send a longer 2X2 CQ “TEST KODQ KODQ TEST” a few times, same interval.
4. Repeat above.

In the best of all worlds you'll have a small but consistent stream of callers – 1 or 2 at a time. That leads to the highest rates. More often it will be aces and spaces - nothing for a minute or two, then 3 or 4 callers (too often, all are zero beat), then silence again.

- Balance. Don't be too concerned about equalizing the number of contacts on each band. Once you've worked many of the garden variety mults, focus intensely on rate. Go to the band you can run best . . . with one caveat. One exception to the rule. Simply put, don't miss the 10 meter opening to Europe. 10 meters is the most fragile of the bands and a disruption can wipe it out, and with it 40-60 mults. In marginal conditions (e.g. solar flux Index < 100) you may want to spend enough time early on harvesting easy mults, even at the expense of slower rate.
- Running Japan. I don't spend a lot of time running JAs. The activity levels in contests are not usually high, although short runs can be helpful to coax a few other Asia/Pacific mults out of the woodwork. Due to the international dateline, the best evenings are Friday and Saturday since Sunday evening here is Monday morning of the work week in Tokyo. This is obviously a tougher path from the East Coast so getting the mults earlier is a good idea.
- Selecting and maintaining a run frequency. Lower vs. higher in the band. Low is good, but less important these days. Traditionally, the bottom 10 KHz of a band (or phone sub-band) have been considered the prime contesting real estate, occupied by the multiop behemoths and other super stations. The rationale was that most people will tune a band from the bottom up. With the advent of spotting - and especially the RBN on CW - many believe that is no longer true or at least not as important as before. As the new logic goes, the RBN network will find you wherever you are and spot you on the cluster. A minor nuance in selecting run frequency is that some of the RBN spotter stations only spot limited frequency range. The RBN website reveals some stations that do not spot above 70 on several bands or cover ten meters at all. That's not a fatal flaw. You should still get spotted if you're higher in the band, but perhaps not as often as otherwise.
- Ergonomics. A key factor in sustaining a high rate is personal comfort. Similarly, minimizing extraneous movement becomes important over time. For example, in running you will use the RIT a lot (amazing how many people call several hundred hertz off your frequency). Instead of reaching for the (generally smaller) RIT knob (in a generally crowded neighborhood), W3LPL recommends putting your transceiver in SPLIT mode, transmitting on VFO B and receiving on VFO A so you can use the big main tuning knob. You may be able to take that a step further if your software has the ability to control the RIT. I operate with Win-Test with K-3's and use the PAGE UP and PAGE DOWN to adjust the RIT without moving my hands from the keyboard.
- On phone, talking fast is definitely an asset as long as you articulate well. As NN3W and others have found, if your brain can process fast enough, it's not necessary to use phonetics in responding to a caller, especially if it's one of the usual suspects. Instead of "Victor Papa Two Mexico Xray" just say "VP2MX" – half the syllables. It all adds up in extra contacts over time.

The need for speed. On CW, speed can be an effective way of controlling the pileup size... So how fast is fast enough? One of the interesting sidelights of the RBN data is that it records code speed for the CQing station. A quick analysis of 17 of the top

single op scorers reveals an average speed of 33 WPM, ranging from a low of 31.33 (K3WW) to a high of 35.37 (KL2A @ NN3W). I was in second place with 34.67. My recommendation is to send as fast conditions warrant (and you can copy reliably). I typically try to run at 38 or 40 WPM during the morning runs on the high bands, but slow down on the low bands and later in the contest. Again, speed itself isn't as critical as the need to sound professional so that callers believe they can get in and out quickly.

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

Taking Care of our Contesting Sport

Two excerpts from John Dorr K1AR's CTU 2026 presentation *Taking Care of our Contesting Sport*. For those of you haven't heard of John, among other things John is the current Director of the CQWW DX Contest, past Contesting Editor for CQ Magazine from 1989 to 2011, and a 1997 inductee into the CQ Contest Hall of Fame. If you think these are just whines from an old Contester wanting things to be the way they were, John mentions the following people as contributing to his presentation. I'm sure SFCG members will recognize these calls: Ken Adams K5KA (SK), Doug Grant K1DG, Larry Tyree N6TR, Ward Silver N0AX, Dave McCarty K5GN, Kirk Pickering K4RO, and Randy Thompson K5ZD.

Contest Code of Conduct

- I will learn and obey the rules of any contest I enter, including the rules of my entry category.

- I will obey the rules for amateur radio in my country.
- I will not modify my log after the contest by using additional data sources to correct callsign/exchange errors.
- I will accept the judging and scoring decisions of the contest sponsor as final.
- I will adhere to the DX Code of Conduct in my operating style (see dxcode.org).
- I will yield my frequency to any emergency communications activity.
- I will operate my transmitter with sufficient signal quality to minimize interference to others

Rules

Something that is not explicitly defined in the rules is not a free pass to doing it

- Examples:
 - Asking friends to only work you
 - Working someone with multiple calls
 - Cheerleading on spotting networks
 - Club members only working other club members
 - Writing calls into your log
 - Logging partially copied info
 - Using spotting assistance as a single-op unassisted entry (or “just a little”)
 - Self-spotting when not permitted

The “spirit of the rules” applies here

Tips to Improve Your FT8-4 Contest Performance

Two excerpts from Ed Muns W0YK/P49X’s CTU 2026 presentation *Tips to Improve Your FT8-4 Contest Performance*. Since the Editor doesn’t contest with those modes he suggests those of you that do look over the full presentation at <https://www.contestuniversity.com/files/>. Note that Ed uses short descriptions in his presentations and expounds on those topics in his talks so you are a bit on your own to interpret what these talking points mean.

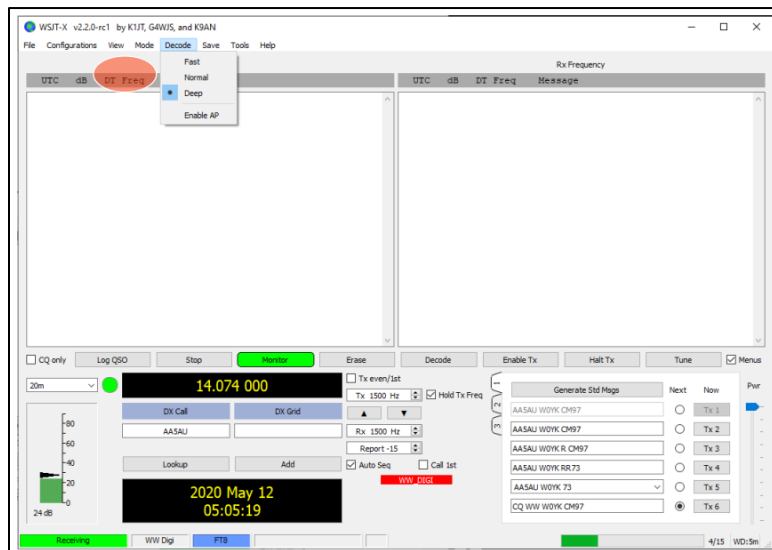
Time Synchronization mandatory for reliable QSOs

- Windows Internet Time Sync
 - Weekly updates (modifiable)
 - Can be unreliable
- Alternatives (update often, e.g. hourly)
 - Meinberg NTP (recommended by K1JT)
 - NetTime (recommended by W0YK)
 - Dimension 4
 - Atomic Clock Sync

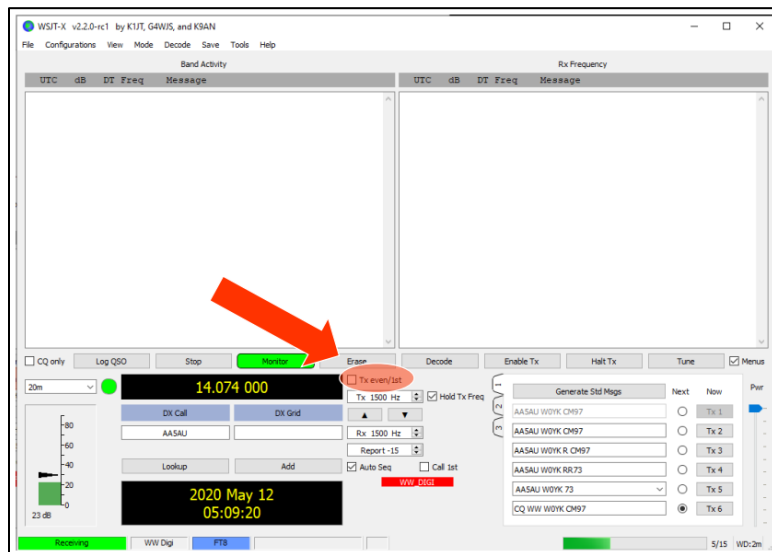
Suppressed-Carrier dial frequency

- FT4: xxx80 (now the daily default)
- FT8: xxx90
- Use receiver’s maximum BW: 2.5-4 kHz
- QSO partner > 3 kHz ... call above 3 kHz
- Move dial frequency up in 3 kHz increments

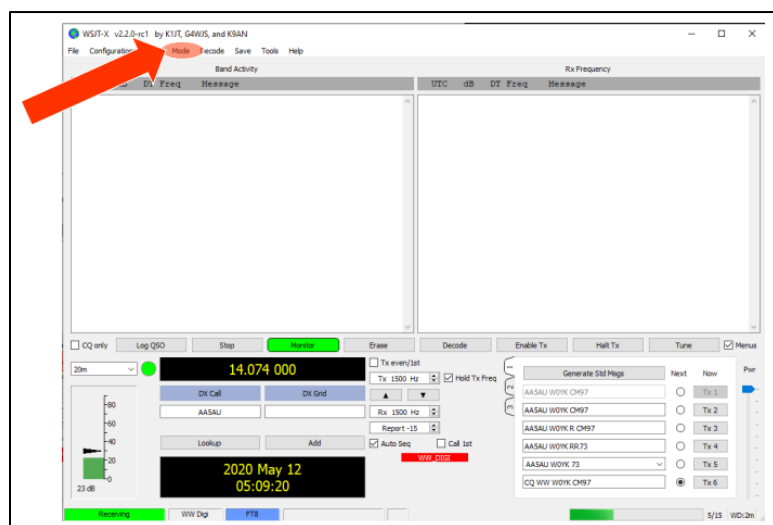
Deep Decode



Rotate Odd/Even Cycles



Rotate FT4/FT8 Modes



FT Fill Protocol

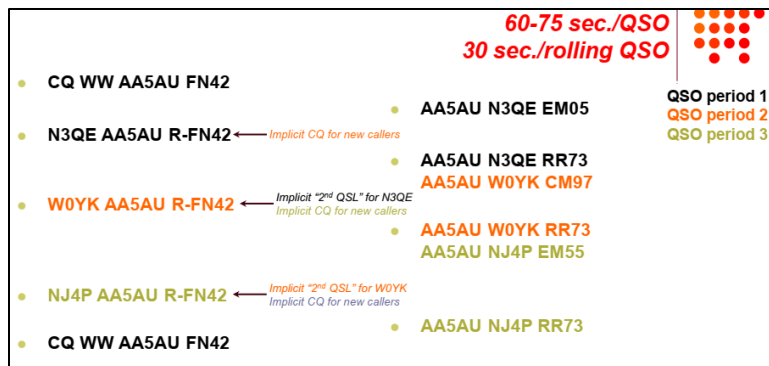
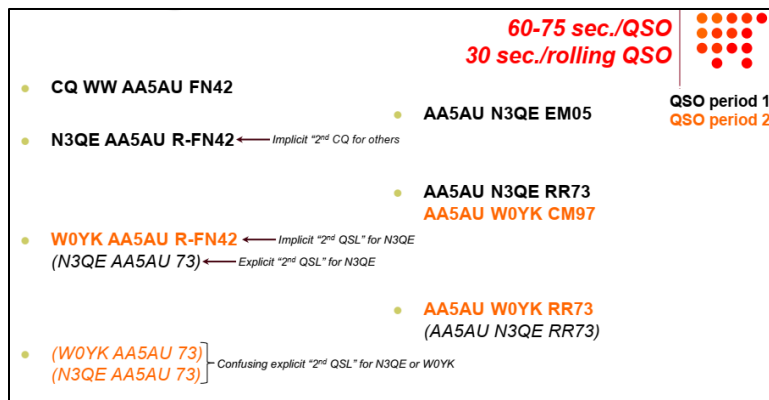
CQ W0YK CM97	
W0YK AA5AU EL92	←AA5AU calls with exch
AA5AU W0YK R CM97	← W0YK's QSL with exch
W0YK AA5AU RR73	←AA5AU's QSL; QSO complete
AA5AU W0YK R CM97	← AA5AU implicitly "asks" for a repeat
W0YK AA5AU RR73	←W0YK repeats QSL msg

WW Digi QSO

		60-75 sec./QSO	
• CQ WW AA5AU FN42		• AA5AU N3QE EM05	
• N3QE AA5AU R-FN42		• AA5AU N3QE RR73	← QSO complete
• (N3QE AA5AU 73)	← N3QE may expect this "2nd QSL"	• (AA5AU N3QE RR73)	← N3QE may repeat if no "2nd QSL"

FT4 & FT8

- Run station QSLs the S&P QSL
- Implied by default WSJT-X logging behavior
- De facto expectation
 - Many FT ops won't log the QSO without the superfluous QSL of the final QSL
 - Thus, NIL rate increases
 - CW, SSB & RTTY = 1-2%
 - FT = 5-6%



From the Reflector:

- Frank KG4IGC is home from the hospital. Undergoing therapy and we hope to hear he's back to normal soon. Frank is going to use some CW sending therapy to improve his hand coordination.
- Many Foxes worked RI1FJL on Franz Joseph Land. FT8 seemed to be the most popular mode. It was good to see the many activity posts on the reflector to help members find them.
- Ed K3DNE probably has a butt and back ache. He wrote regarding the CQWW Digi, "Stayed awake till 1:30am only (literally fell asleep in the chair) and was back on at 5:30am for our sunrise but no AK (JA, ZL and VK though!)."

- Andy AA5JF thinks he might have done well enough in the KSQP to have won a T-shirt. Hope so Andy.
- John W7WZ posted the 1st place USA plaque sent to him for the 2026 WPX SSB contest. The team at his contest station, using call sign AA4V, entered the Multi-Multi category. AA4VT, K1ZZI, K3DNE, W4IX, W7WZ, WN4AFP, and WR4W should be proud of their effort. Good job team!
- The WRTC cheating fiasco generated quite a bit of chatter. See below if you aren't familiar with what happened.
- Wallpaper is wallpaper. It all looks good. Dick KD4S showed his 1st place South Carolina, Fixed, HP certificate in the 2025 NH QSO party. He was 11th of the Out of State ops with 48 points. Alan W4ANT shared his 3rd place certificate in the same category. Alan was disappointed Dick whipped him, but the fact that Alan only made 3 Q's made it a bit easier to take. In case y'all hadn't figured it out yet, activity was very light in the NHQP.
- Jim N2ZZ had to comment on the rules change to the 2026 CQWW contests. He wrote,
"I just have to comment. I had no idea that there were autonomous robots in contesting.

I do not know how they were used in contesting, and I may be very much off base. However, my take on automatic operation is that it is unethical in general and illegal depending on your country. I put through a definitive statement through the ARRL Programs and Services committee for the FT/x modes. In brief, the contact must be at least initiated by the control operator, contacts must be peer-to-peer via RF and no automatic operation is to be allowed at any time for a contact to be considered valid for award credit.

Wow, I learn something new every day!"

Thank you for that proposed rule change, Jim.

- Tom K7OM enjoyed playing a couple hours in the RUDX RTTY contest.
- Several members entered the TNQP. Andy AA5JF was up that way and enjoyed making a few Q's from TN.
- Dave NJ4F is offering the following vintage equipment free to SFCG members. He can pass them along at the SFCG meeting at W7WZ on Sunday, September 27th. A Heathkit SB-102 transceiver (Picture shows includes the matching power supply), Heathkit HM-102 wattmeter, MJF 944 tuner, (those three together as a lot, Heathkit IG-42 Laboratory Generator, Heathkit IO-103 O'scope, Heathkit DX-60A, Heathkit VF-1 VFO, and a Hallicrafters S=118
- Rumors Matt NU4E is a SK are not true. Matt posted a score for his few hours dabbling in the WAE.

Cheating in the WRTC

By Kevan N4XL

Two of the top three teams in the 2026 WRTC have been disqualified for cheating. So were two other teams. Victor 4X6GP wrote on the CWops reflector, "Wow. I can't understand the

mentality of those who did this. I guess I'm just not competitive enough. I recommend that everyone read the link. You have to appreciate the ingenuity of the cheaters. Unfortunately for them, the authorities were smarter." To which Doug KR2Q wrote, "1. No. It is not "competitiveness" you are lacking, it is that you lack the "unscrupulous" gene. 2. The "authorities" did NOT find this. The "public" and other IARU competitors did. The authorities "reacted" due to the diligence of others. Crowd-sourcing of log checking is a good thing. Hurrah for public logs."

From what I could discern Doug is right. Neither the WRTC Committee nor the team judges identified anything was wrong either during or after the contest. The logs were made public after the event and they were scrutinized by other Hams. There was quite the discussion about what they found on reflectors, and I'm sure privately as well. That pushed the WRTC Committee to exam the logs more closely and there was at least a six week deep dive into the issue using logs and data from over 30 skimmers.

So... What did they do? A PDF with details from the WRTC can be found here <https://www.wrtc2026.org/>, but here is a brief summary.

First reported cheat.

Long before a contest starts it is common practice for strong stations to stake out their Run frequency on "prime real estate" by calling CQ. As the WRTC Committee puts it, "At 12:00z the bands were crowded, and a clear frequency was very valuable." Two "fairly strong" non-WRTC stations did that and established a presence on 15 and 20 meters before the WRTC started.

The first started a CQ on 15 meters about 35 minutes before the contest. The other started their CQ's on 20 meters about 15 minutes prior. No problem so far. But then, 30 seconds before the WRTC started, both non-WRTC stations inexplicably stopped sending CQ on those prime frequencies. 30 seconds later MB1I (one of the disqualified teams) chose those two frequencies for their two man team to start the contest. That's unusual. Why would two stations stop calling CQ and give up good frequencies just seconds before the contest starts? Seconds during which another station is unlikely to discover the now empty frequency and move in. Coincidences and by itself that is only suspicious, not illegal. What happened next makes it very suspicious. One of the two CQer's moved just 8 KHz away and again started CQing. The other CQer had stopped but stayed put. They then reportedly worked MB1I and began doing S&P on 15 for 57 contacts without ever calling CQ again. Huh. Still Just a coincidence? Unlikely. The WRTC Committee also notes, "Earlier that morning both frequencies had been occupied by the team's own operators using their personal callsigns."

The WRTC also concluded, "Based on the timing, duration, frequency continuity, subsequent conduct of the holding stations, the circumstances surrounding the contest start, and the responses received from the teams, it was concluded that these were not coincidental frequency changes but deliberately arranged transfers that disclosed the identity of the arriving WRTC teams to persons aware of the arrangement." MB1I, MB2A and MB2M were disqualified for violating WRTC rule 12.2

Second reported cheat.

"Ten unusual multiplier-enhancing claimed contacts were present in the MB5Q log. The audio review conducted before the Awards Ceremony was necessarily prioritized by finishing position and did not include this log. However, the MB5Q log was examined in

the post-event re-examination. There was no trace of any audio from these logged phantom stations on the recordings provided by the team, although audio from both the preceding and the following contacts surrounding the phantom contacts was clearly present.”

Pretty cut and dried. This was MB5Q. The operator logged Q’s from rarer multipliers that stations that were not on the air. (I’ll note that in a now deleted post Alex KU1CW wrote all of those Q’s were from his partner station and not from his.)

Third reported cheat.

“In an investigation prompted by information received from the outside public, it was found that what appears to be a small number of outside individuals using 15 pirated callsigns gave fraudulent multiplier-enhancing “contacts” to WRTC stations that favored the MB2A and MB2M teams. The contacts were made using pirated callsigns of known radio contest participants, fooling or misleading the Committee into believing that these QSOs were genuine.”

MB2A and MB2M had 32 and 36 QSO’s respectively with the pirate(s) while the third highest team to have contacts with them only had 14. There is substantial evidence showing the pirate(s) were indeed illegitimate. An explanation of the evidence is available here: <https://q5hamradio.substack.com/p/the-integrity-question-inside-the> .

All of these operators are exceptional testers. It is sad they felt the need to take actions resulting in their disqualification.

This also reminds me of a reflector post from a few years ago where some operators objected to having their logs made public, and again when log submission time was shortened to a week or even a day. Some said they were so much against it that they weren’t going to enter contests that did so anymore. I’ve wondered what they were trying to hide and thought they wouldn’t be missed very much when the results came out. (Yeah, I know there could be some cases where people were on a DXpedition and couldn’t get back in time to enter their log on time. But even if true in this day of worldwide connectivity it would be a miniscule percentage of the total entries. Seemed to me the advantages of those rules outweighed the disadvantages – or those with a legitimate claim of such difficulties might be able to arrange a delay with the sponsors.)

Observations by the Editor:

- If, like me, you learned about electronics in the 1970’s you probably remember a simple pi-filtered full wave rectified power supply had a transformer, some diodes, a couple capacitors and a choke (inductor). Failing to use an adequate choke gave 120 Hz voltage ripple (heard as audio hum for you newer folk) no matter how big the capacitors were. Times have apparently changed. I’m going to keep Barry’s advice (User name FLYaDIVE and no call given) on the Amateur-Repairs Reflector in mind for quick repairs to or design of any power supply work I need to do. He wrote, “Chokes were the way of smoothing the DC. BUT - Today there are HUGE Value Capacitors available. A couple of them (27,000 uF @ Greater than the WORKING Voltage). You can SCRAP the CHOKe and invest in a couple of Capacitors - Size as Great as You Can Afford. They WILL do the job. IF you want - And want to SEE (learn) what the Caps do - Hook up a O Scope and watch the FANTASTIC smoothing the Caps do.”

As a check of Barry's advice I asked ChatGPT what size filter capacitors would be needed for a 120 VAC to 12 VDC, full wave bridge rectified, 25A, power supply using a transformer, but no choke. It's answer was a bit different. It suggested capacitors in the 200,000 to 300,000 uF range based upon the magnitude of ripple current. It also suggested that using several smaller rated capacitors in a bank would be cheaper than one massive device. Still, it agreed with Barry that one large capacitor should work.

- The longtime favorite VE7CC cluster seems to be fading. Besides having no updates to the great program CCUser anymore the cluster seems to be off-line so often it has become unreliable. People are moving on to other clusters.
- I've repeatedly been told over the years to put a fan blowing across the back of my radio when it is heavily used, such as when contesting or during Field Day. Makes sense for rigs having cooling fins, but for years I've wondered about the effectiveness of that on radios which rely on internal air flow cooling fans – which is most of the modern radios I see today. Those internal fans almost always draw air from the front of the radio and blow it out the back. Do external fans pointed at the back help those rigs? Or could the air pushing on the back actually hurt internal air circulation? I've come to respect the wisdom of Ryuji Suzuki AB1WX's postings on the TS-590 Groups.io reflector. Here are some selected thoughts from him about the the TS-590. They probably apply to other radios too. These are taken from several posts in the recent thread titled "Air Flow".

"Unless you're annoyed by the fan noise, or your operating environment is uncomfortably hot (which mine can be), I don't think an additional fan is necessary. The internal fans are there to do work, not sit idle. One useful thing to do is to make sure the internal airflow is unobstructed and free of dust, and TS590 is placed away from the walls or other pieces of equipment, giving enough space for the air to move freely."

"A useful way to think about TS-590 cooling is to separate "safe operation" from "taking a little extra care of the equipment." The stock cooling system is designed to keep the radio within safe operating limits and protect the final amplifier. There is temperature sensing, fan control, and protection circuitry. So when the high-speed fan comes on, that does not by itself mean something is wrong. It usually means the cooling system is doing what it was designed to do."

"The practical rule is simply to preserve the airflow Kenwood designed for and avoid obvious heat traps. Do not block the bottom/front air intake or the rear exhaust area. Do not stack equipment so tightly that hot air accumulates around the radio, especially in a stagnant pocket behind a shelf or rack. If the installation tends to trap or recirculate hot air, a slow, quiet external fan can help. That is the useful level of concern: make sure the designed airflow can actually work, assist it when that is easy, and otherwise let the radio's own cooling system do its job."

"If a fan is aimed at TS590 from some distance and the air is not intentionally channeled or trapped, it may or may not help meaningfully, but it's at least mixing the air in the vicinity somewhat randomly, so it's hard to interfere with the internal fans to the detriment. It may interfere with intentionally designed delivery of cold air to the air inlet, if you had such a setup, though."

"It's not that easy to intentionally direct airflow to cool the heat sink. If you want to optimize the cooling intentionally, that setup will probably have to be very deliberately done. Heat dissipation and thermal design are a very messy part of the equipment design. A lot of things are somewhat counterintuitive, difficult to get accurate calculations, though there are many rules of thumb. Similar but different from RF engineering."

“Placing a fan on the rear panel without covering the entire area will not work well. Placing a fan directly on the bottom panel is also risky.”

“Unless you're annoyed by the fan noise, or your operating environment is uncomfortably hot (which mine can be), I don't think an additional fan is necessary. The internal fans are there to do work, not sit idle. One useful thing to do is to make sure the internal airflow is unobstructed and free of dust, and TS590 is placed away from the walls or other pieces of equipment, giving enough space for the air to move freely.

The smallest effective addition is to place the fan on the bottom of the supporting surface, with a hole placed right under the bottom front grille area, and blow the air upward. Use a large axial fan spinning at a low rpm if you want quiet.

But that's probably not very convenient unless you have TS590 on a small custom platform or bracket (like some people do when they use a laptop on a desk). I certainly don't think it's worth drilling a big hole on the top surface of the desk.

Another effective way, less invasive to your desk, is to build a plenum to cover the rear end of TS590 and make that space negative pressure, ideally with a centrifugal fan. A fan that maintains flow against some static pressure is desirable, and so a centrifugal fan is a good choice, but that may not be necessary. A large axial fan at low rpm may very well do.”

He also thinks prolonged 100 watt operation is likely extreme operation for a 100 watt radio, which implies extra cooling could help. My takeaway? A fan should be useful if placed correctly. I direct my fan, when I use one, at the bottom of the rig trying to get cooler air flow to the rig's air intake. I also operate at 90 watts instead of 100 to reduce heat generation without significantly affecting signal strength.

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.)
 - SDRplay and Airspy native support – including ability to use more than one of each kind for SO2R/SO2V. See N1MM Reflector post #102592 for more info
 - This applies to
 - SDRplay RSP1, RSP1A, RSP1B, RSOduo
 - Airspy HF+, Discovery. Airspy HF should work but wasn't tested.
 - Not yet implemented: RSP2, RSPdx, or Airspy R2/mini
 - Today's build (8/25/2026) adds experimental native support for a few SDR models directly in SDR Server, without needing the vendor's ExtIO plugin DLL.
 - See post #102592 (or later ones too?) for explanation how to use two SDR receivers of the same type.
 - The SDR Server and Spectrum Windows have had extensive work done to keep them running smoothly and not freeze up so often.
- Have you looked through N1MM's list of Macro commands lately and thought about they might help you in a contest? Some thoughts...

- {SPACE}

Don't like using ESM when you are Running but wish after you sent your Exchange the cursor would always move to their Exchange field so you are ready to copy what they send? You could just push the space bar and move the cursor to it yourself, but why push that space bar every Q? No biggie, just completely unnecessary.

{SPACE} simulates pushing the space bar for you. You could use:

F2 EXCH,5NN SC {SPACE}

- {END}

Signals the program that the remaining {} commands are to be executed when the program returns from sending the CW, SSB or DIGI messages.

- If you are trying to set up an Ulanzi D100H Tuning Dial with N1MM but N1MM isn't appearing in the list of available applications to associate with the Tuning Dial, then you might find some help with Tom N1MM's post #102546 (and that thread) which is on the N1MM reflector.
- Having trouble with a N1MM feature that used to work but doesn't now? N1MM is a complicated program. Updates happen every week. New radio models coming out and firmware update to older ones are common and can adversely affect N1MM, but sometimes things stop working as you think it should, it is because N1MM was deliberately changed. Randy W8FN was a W1AW/4 operator and discovered the long working "Reset RX Freq to TX when QSO is Logged (Run & Split)" option wasn't doing what it was supposed to. He used an ALT+F11 combination in conjunction with that option when Running on one VFO and listening on the other, but things weren't working correctly anymore. Randy asked the reflector if anyone else was having the same issue.

Mike VE9AA suggested Randy search the reflector using his radios model number. I have long searched both the reflector and the manual for both radio number and for a solution to whatever problem I'm having. When searching I pay particular attention to the weekly update posts from Tom N1MM which are titled "RE: New Version". Sometimes a change is plainly listed. Sometimes the text of changes made may not exactly spell out what I'm having trouble with, but if it sounds close I'll dig a bit deeper into what that change did.

Randy said he has a K4. There was some back and forth from other K4 owners on possible solutions until Mike VE9AA figured out the real culprit. He provided a copy of the text from a RE: New Version change in May 2026 that included, "6. K4: Change ALT+F10 to swap frequency and mode. (N2NT) (Coded by K3CT". John K3CT of the Development Team wrote, "Good thinking Mike. This K4 change was to use a different firmware command when pressing the Alt+F10 keystroke."

(I'll note that both ALT+F10 and ALT+F11 were tossed around in that discussion and it wasn't clear to me how the two were related, but Randy was satisfied with what Mike found and replied, "Thanks for the great detective work, Mike." and K3CT

wrote, "Good thinking Mike.", so apparently all were satisfied the note found in the New Version memo explained what was happening. That's what I mean about sometimes the wording in the weekly change posts might not clearly match what you are having trouble with, so you have to dig a bit deeper.)

As an aside, that weekly version update thread is what I review to come up with entries for the "Selected changes..." section above. There is often interesting things I don't understand or hadn't thought about in those weekly posts. While pulling the string to learn what the heck they're talking about I sometimes find new things to put in my contesting tool bag.

- SO2V operation. Using CTRL+Fx to send a function key message on the other VFO frequency. By default that combination will shift both transmit and receive focus to the other VFO. For example, you are CQing on VFO A and listening to both VFO's A and B. Initially transmit focus is on VFO A and receive focus is on both A and B. You find a mult on VFO B and send your call using CTRL+F4. As soon as you push CTRL+F4 both transmit and receive focus are on VFO B. You can no longer hear your CQ frequency. After making your S&P QSO on VFO B you have to push a key or combination of keys so both receive and transmit focus is VFO A and then restart your CQ. Even then receive focus might only be on VFO A so you have to do something else to return receive focus to both A and B. A solution is to click "Config>Sub Receiver Always On". Once selected receive focus will always stay so you can hear both VFO A and B after transmitting using CTRL+Fx.

Besides being easier to manage, doing it that way lets you hear if someone is late answering your CQ or trying to take your CQ frequency while you are focusing on that S&P Q. If you get a pileup on your Run frequency and don't want to hear VFO B you can use the ~ key to shift back and forth between hearing only VFO A or hearing both A and B.

Upcoming Contests:

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

SFOTA Current Leaderboard:

As of 9/16/2026

2026 Overall Standings							Contest year
							2026 ▼
RANK	CALL	CONTESTS	CW	SSB	DIGITAL	RTTY	TOTAL
1	WB4HRL	257	13437	244	393	548	14622
2	KE4EA	133	8823	1251	9	0	10083
3	K1ZZI	77	7507	629	0	18	8154
4	WN4AFP	25	5126	2758	7	0	7891
5	K3DNE	16	561	5512	637	0	6710
6	WB3X	53	4028	1896	0	0	5924
7	K4QQG	48	25	3938	486	196	4645
8	K4FT	71	4184	26	0	274	4484
9	NV4T	60	70	2477	275	471	3293
10	KZ3P	49	1163	1557	51	186	2957
11	KA2G	12	0	1156	1240	0	2396
12	KD4S	38	1516	158	78	581	2333
13	K4AMA	52	1550	652	9	19	2230
14	N4XL	9	1266	899	0	0	2165
15	WR4W	30	1252	339	0	485	2076
16	W4ANT	35	706	1050	88	150	1994
17	KG4IGC	10	333	131	0	1320	1784
18	K7OM	14	932	0	0	824	1756
19	K2SX	7	1610	0	0	0	1610
20	KS4YX	4	228	0	0	904	1132
21	N4QI	35	818	290	0	0	1108
22	WA4LDU	38	62	612	242	98	1014
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	KS4VJ	5	0	0	101	0	101
28	WA2BCK	1	25	0	0	0	25

3830 Activity:

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
AIQP				
08/22/26	WN4AFP	SOMixed	LP	528
ARRL Sep VHF				
09/14/26	K3DNE	Single Op-All Modes	HP	7,888
09/15/26	WA4LDU	Single Op-All Modes	LP	2,340
CoQP				
09/13/26	K4FT	SOCW	LP	420
09/15/26	KZ3P	SOMixed	HP	260
09/13/26	NV4T	SOMixed	HP	864
09/13/26	W4ANT	SOMixed	HP	8
09/14/26	WB3X	SOMixed	LP	608
09/14/26	WB4HRL	SOCW	HP	112
HiQP				
08/24/26	K4FT	SOAB	LP	27
08/24/26	KZ3P	SOAB	LP	30
08/24/26	NV4T	SOAB	HP	84
08/25/26	WA4LDU	SOAB	LP	68
08/24/26	WB4HRL	SOAB	HP	12
08/25/26	WN4AFP	SOAB	LP	12
KsQP				
08/30/26	AA5JF	SO Mixed	HP	92,053
08/30/26	K1ZZI	SO CW	HP	11,685
08/30/26	K4FT	SO CW	LP	2,691
08/30/26	K4QQG	SO SSB	HP	392
08/31/26	KD4S	SO Mixed	HP	7,955
08/31/26	KE4EA	SO Mixed	HP	5,153
08/31/26	KZ3P	SO Mixed	HP	23,427
08/30/26	N2ZZ	SO Mixed	HP	21,728
08/31/26	N4QI	SO Mixed	LP	40
08/30/26	NV4T	SO Mixed	HP	7,296
08/30/26	W4ANT	SO Mixed	LP	12,904
08/30/26	WA4LDU	SO SSB	LP	3,058
08/30/26	WB3X	SO Mixed	LP	3,536
08/30/26	WB4HRL	SO CW	HP	297
09/12/26	WN4AFP	SO Mixed	LP	473
NA Sprint CW September				
09/13/26	W4IX	Single Op	HP	11,745
NAQP SSB August				

08/18/26	K1ZZI	Single Op	LP	13,502
08/17/26	KE4EA	Single Op Assisted	LP	2,135
08/19/26	KZ3P	Single Op	LP	1,107
08/21/26	WN4AFP	Single Op Assisted	LP	255
NJQP				
09/13/26	K4FT	Single Op	LP	144
09/15/26	KZ3P	Single Op	HP	40
09/13/26	NV4T	Single Op	HP	171
09/14/26	WB3X	Single Op	LP	1,248
09/14/26	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	480
OhQP				
08/23/26	K1ZZI	Single Op	HP	18,666
08/24/26	K4FT	Single Op	LP	2,494
08/23/26	K4QQG	Single Op	HP	120
08/30/26	KE4EA	Single Op	LP	32
08/23/26	KZ3P	Single Op	LP	3,204
08/23/26	N4QI	Single Op	LP	144
08/23/26	NV4T	Single Op	HP	1,518
08/25/26	WA4LDU	Single Op	LP	396
08/23/26	WB3X	Single Op	LP	3,360
08/24/26	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	3,724
08/23/26	WN4AFP	Single Op	LP	23,000
Rus RTTY				
09/06/26	K7OM	SOAB	HP	3,792
09/07/26	KD4S	SOAB	HP	132
SARTG				
08/18/26	NV4T	SOAB	LP	17,160
TnQP				
09/07/26	AA5JF	SO MobileMixed	LP	174,839
09/07/26	K1ZZI	SO FixedCW	HP	10,910
09/08/26	K4FT	SO FixedCW	LP	75
09/07/26	KD4S	SO FixedMixed	HP	3,186
09/09/26	KE4EA	SO FixedMixed	HP	4,890
09/07/26	KZ3P	SO FixedMixed	LP	11,157
09/07/26	NV4T	SO MobileSSB	LP	4,520
09/07/26	W4IX	SO FixedMixed	LP	84,716
09/07/26	WB3X	SO FixedMixed	LP	10,650
09/07/26	WB4HRL	SO FixedMixed	HP	3,680
09/12/26	WN4AFP	SO FixedMixed	LP	1,954
WAE SSB				
09/14/26	K4QQG	Single Op	HP	11,881
09/15/26	KZ3P	Single Op	HP	408

09/14/26	NU4E	Single Op	HP	165,300
WW RTTY				
09/01/26	K7OM	SO/Single Xcvr	HP	3,296
WWDigi				
08/30/26	K3DNE	SO/Single Signal	HP	8,932
08/30/26	K4QQG	SO/Single Signal	LP	161
08/30/26	KA2G	SO/Single Xcvr	HP	71,424
08/31/26	KE4EA	SO/Single Signal	HP	28
08/31/26	KS4VJ	SO/Single Signal	HP	1,904
08/31/26	KZ3P	SO/Single Signal	LP	280
08/31/26	WA4LDU	SO/Single Signal	LP	1,540
08/30/26	WB4HRL	SO/Single Xcvr	LP	14,352
08/30/26	WR4W	SO/Single Signal	QRP	120

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73 es QRT de N4XL