



CONTEST ORIENTATION

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MIKE ROSS, VE6TC

NEEROO SHARMA-HALL, VE6NRO

GENERAL NOTICE

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, EXIT THE WAY WE CAME IN.

ADDITIONAL EXITS ARE IN THE BASEMENT, SIDE AND BACK OF MEETING HALL.

MUSTER OUTSIDE, WEST FENCE.

WASHROOMS ARE DOWNSTAIRS.

THIS IS A WORKSHOP, ASK QUESTIONS ANY TIME.

LEARN BY PARTICIPATING.

WHAT'S YOUR CONTEST EXPERIENCE?



CONTEST ORIENTATION

What is a contest and why might I want to be in one?

What goes on during a contest?

Overview of logging software.

How to operate in a contest.

Try out typical contest exchanges off-air.

What about interference?

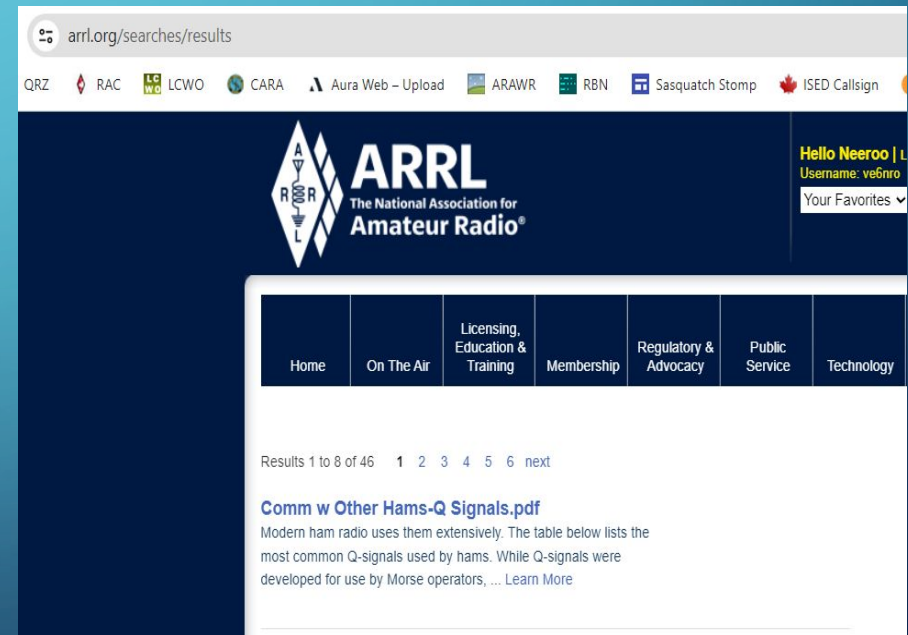


WHAT IS A CONTEST AND WHY WOULD I BE IN ONE?

- A contest is a competition to collect points for awards, self-improvement or just fun!
- Make lots of quick contacts and see how many per hour, day or single sitting.
- Pick up continents, countries, states, provinces, sections, counties or grid squares for awards like WAS (Worked All States).
- Collect QSL cards or contact credits for operating awards like WAS , WAC, DXCC, etc.
- Test new antennas, propagation on different bands, hours of operation.
- Participate in club events – ARRL Field Day, Winter Field Day, club station contests.
- Emergency training exercises, passing short accurate messages over longer times.
- **Gain on air operating experience.**

KNOW YOUR Q CODES AND PHONETICS

- Q Codes are shortcuts for common expressions.
- Many can be either a question or a statement eg
- QSL –acknowledge
 - QSL? – do you acknowledge?
 - QSL! – I acknowledge!
- Commonly used – QRZ, QSL, QRM, QSB



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `arrl.org/searches/results`. The browser's address bar and tabs are visible at the top. The ARRL logo, "The National Association for Amateur Radio", is prominently displayed in the header. A navigation menu below the logo includes links for Home, On The Air, Licensing, Education & Training, Membership, Regulatory & Advocacy, Public Service, and Technology. The search results section shows "Results 1 to 8 of 46" and a list of results. The first result is titled "Comm w Other Hams-Q Signals.pdf" and includes a brief description: "Modern ham radio uses them extensively. The table below lists the most common Q-signals used by hams. While Q-signals were developed for use by Morse operators, ... Learn More".

WHAT HAPPENS DURING A CONTEST?

- An on-air contact between stations is called a QSO (cue-ess-oh or cue-so).
- During a contest, you can call CQ (looking for other stations) or you can reply to CQ.
- A valid QSO requires your callsign, date, time, frequency, mode, other station's callsign, signal report (RST) and contest exchange.
- A contest exchange is determined by the organizers and is usually your state or province.
- Some contest exchanges are serial numbers – your first QSO is number 1, the second is 2, etc.

RST – by convention, signal strength is always 59 for voice and 599 for CW, regardless of the actual signal strength.

HOW DO I FIND A CONTEST?

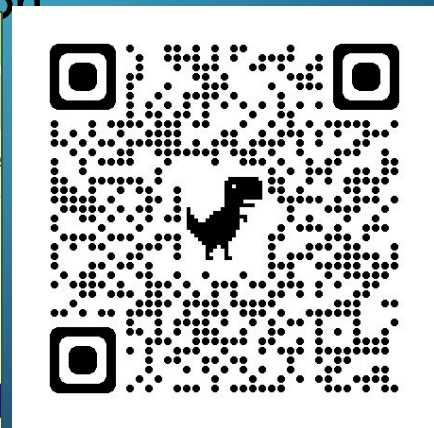
- There is nearly always a contest on-air.
- WA7BNM posts a contest calendar - <https://www.contestcalendar.com>
- The Carolinas QSO Party will be an on-air practice session, information

The screenshot shows the WA7BNM Contest Calendar website. The browser address bar displays `contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html`. The page features a navigation menu with options: Home, 8-Day, 5-Week, 12-Month, Perpetual, State QSO Parties, CW, QRP, Log Due Dates, Historical, Alphabetical, Customize, and Cabrillo Names. A button labeled "Hide Weekly Contests" is visible. Below the navigation, the "January 2024" section lists several contests with their respective dates and times.

Contest Name	Date and Time
+ AGB New Year Snowball Contest	0000Z-0100Z, Jan 1
+ K1USN Slow Speed Test	0000Z-0100Z, Jan 1
+ SARTG New Year RTTY Contest	0800Z-1100Z, Jan 1
+ AGCW Happy New Year Contest	0900Z-1200Z, Jan 1

Website navigation,
note Log Due Dates

Contest names and dates



WHAT IS A CONTEST EXCHANGE AND WHERE DO I FIND IT?

- Find the contest rules and look for the exchange section eg:

South Carolina QSO Party,

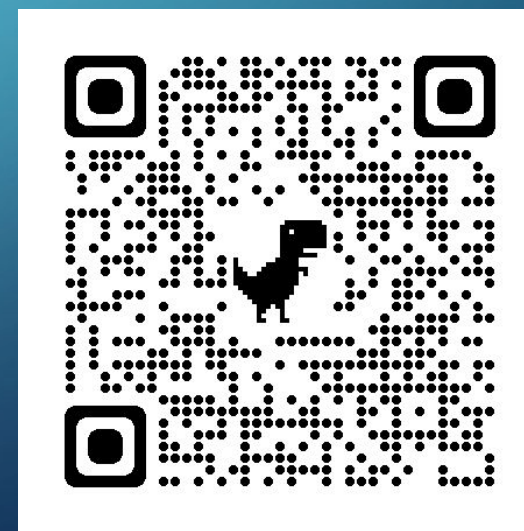
Exchange: SC: RS(T) + County
non-SC: RS(T) + (state/province/"DX")

- Typically signal report and some other information like serial number of contacts made, province, name, age, CQ zone, etc.
- What is your personal exchange data?
- Find your grid square, ARRL section , CQ and ITU zones. Document and display it.

CONTEST LOGGING SOFTWARE

- Historically, logs were written by hand and checked manually.
- Contest logging software records QSO information and displays analytics on the go.
- Requires a computer and cable to connect transceiver (radio) and computer.
- Software is configured for the specific contest and records date, time and frequency of the QSO when you enter the other station's callsign and exchange.
- We use N1MM+, many others are available, listed here:

<https://www.dxzone.com/catalog/Software/Contesting/>



N1MM+ OVERVIEW, AN EXAMPLE

The screenshot displays the N1MM+ software interface with several key windows:

- Manual - VFO A:** Shows a frequency of 14240.00 kHz, mode SSB, and USB filter.
- Available - 0 Mults 0...:** A table showing mults and Qs for various bands and modes.
- 2024-02-09 00:48:33Z ARRL 10 Meter Contest - N1MM DXLog.s3db:** A log table listing contacts with columns for TS, Call, Freq, Snt, Rcv, Exch, M1, Pfx, and Pts.
- Score - 1,064 Points:** A summary window showing contest details and scores.
- 14240.00 USB Manual - VFO A:** A control panel for the VFO with various function buttons like F1 S&P CQ, F2 Exch, etc.
- Info - VE6NRO - Exch: 59 AB:** A window showing a bar chart of Qs for 10, 100, 60m, and 48m bands, along with a Qs/Hr graph and a goal indicator.

2024-02-09 00:48:33Z ARRL 10 Meter Contest - N1MM DXLog.s3db

TS	Call	Freq	Snt	Rcv	Exch	M1	Pfx	Pts
2023-12-10 18:26	N2BJ	28667.01	59	59	IL	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:29	CO2XN	28612.34	59	59	1726		CM	2
2023-12-10 18:30	N0AT	28507.14	59	59	MN	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:33	VE6AO	28484.00	59	59	AB	✓	VE	2
2023-12-10 18:35	WB0YYE	28479.00	59	59	NE	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:44	K4WI	28511.00	59	59	AL	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:46	W1AW/9	28512.96	59	59	IL		K	2
2023-12-10 18:47	K0MD	28580.82	59	59	MN		K	2
2023-12-10 18:50	N4EXA	28373.16	59	59	FL	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:53	TI1T	28396.32	59	59	2782		TI	2
2023-12-10 18:54	K2DRH	28415.00	59	59	IL		K	2
2023-12-10 18:57	VE3LRL	28650.00	59	59	ON	✓	VE	2
2023-12-10 19:04	AC0W	28315.48	59	59	MN		K	2

Score - 1,064 Points

Contest:	Band	QSOs	Pts	S-P	Cty	Pt/Q
ARRL10M	28	28	56	15	4	2.0
	Total	28	56	15	4	2.0

Score: 1,064
1 Mult = 1.5 Q's



Day/Night MAP & Gray Line

The screenshot displays the N1MM DX software interface during an ARRL 10 Meter Contest. The main window shows a log of contacts with columns for Time, Call, Freq, Snt, Rcv, Exch, M1, Pfx, and Pts. A world map window titled 'Gray Line' shows the current position of the Gray Line across the globe. Other windows include 'Available - 0 Mults D...', 'Score - 1,064 Points', and 'Info - 59 AB'.

TS	Call	Freq	Snt	Rcv	Exch	M1	Pfx	Pts
2023-12-10 18:26	N2BJ	28667.01	59	59	IL	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:29	C02XN	28612.34	59	59	1726		CM	2
2023-12-10 18:30	N0AT	28507.14	59	59	MN	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:33	VE6AO	28484.00	59	59	AB	✓	VE	2
2023-12-10 18:35	WB0YYE	28479.00	59	59	NE	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:44	K4WI	28511.00	59	59	AL	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:46	W1AW/9	28512.96	59	59	IL		K	2
2023-12-10 18:47	K0MD	28580.82	59	59	MN		K	2
2023-12-10 18:50	N4EXA	28373.16	59	59	FL	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:53	TI1T	28396.32	59	59	2782		TI	2
2023-12-10 18:54	K2DRH	28415.00	59	59	IL		K	2
2023-12-10 18:57	VE3LRL	28650.00	59	59	ON	✓	VE	2
2023-12-10 19:04	AC0W	28315.48	59	59	MN		K	2

Band	QSOs	Pts	S-P	Cty	Pt/Q
28	28	56	15	4	2.0
Total	28	56	15	4	2.0

Score: 1,064
1 Mult = 1.5 Q's

VE6NRO
Last QSO
> 24hrs

FREQUENCY/BAND MAP OF RADIO; DISPLAYS CURRENT FREQUENCY;
CLICKING ON A FREQUENCY HERE WILL QSY TO THAT FREQUENCY ON THE
RADIO

QSY – change frequency/move to xxx MHz

The screenshot displays the N1MM Logger software interface. On the left is a vertical frequency band map with a current frequency of 14240.00 MHz. The main window shows a log of contacts with the following data:

TS	Call	Freq	Snt	Rcv	Exch	M1	Pfx	Pts
2023-12-10 18:26	N2BJ	28667.01	59	59	IL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	K	2
2023-12-10 18:29	CO2XN	28612.34	59	59	1726		CM	2
2023-12-10 18:30	N0AT	28507.14	59	59	MN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	K	2
2023-12-10 18:33	VE6AO	28484.00	59	59	AB	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	VE	2
2023-12-10 18:35	WB0YYE	28479.00	59	59	NE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	K	2
2023-12-10 18:44	K4WI	28511.00	59	59	AL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	K	2
2023-12-10 18:46	W1AW/9	28512.96	59	59	IL		K	2
2023-12-10 18:47	K0MD	28580.82	59	59	MN		K	2
2023-12-10 18:50	N4EXA	28373.16	59	59	FL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	K	2
2023-12-10 18:53	TI1T	28396.32	59	59	2782		TI	2
2023-12-10 18:54	K2DRH	28415.00	59	59	IL		K	2
2023-12-10 18:57	VE3LRL	28650.00	59	59	ON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	VE	2
2023-12-10 19:04	AC0W	28315.48	59	59	MN		K	2

Other windows shown include:

- Available - 0 Mults D...:** A window for managing mults and bands.
- Score - 1,064 Points:** A summary window showing contest results for ARRL10M.
- Info - VE6NRO - Exch: 59 AB:** A window showing a bar chart of Q's per hour and a goal for 24 hours.
- 14240.00 USB Manual - VFO A:** A window for manual frequency control.

Running score, showing raw points, and any bonuses or multipliers (mults) applied

The screenshot displays a radio contest software interface with several windows:

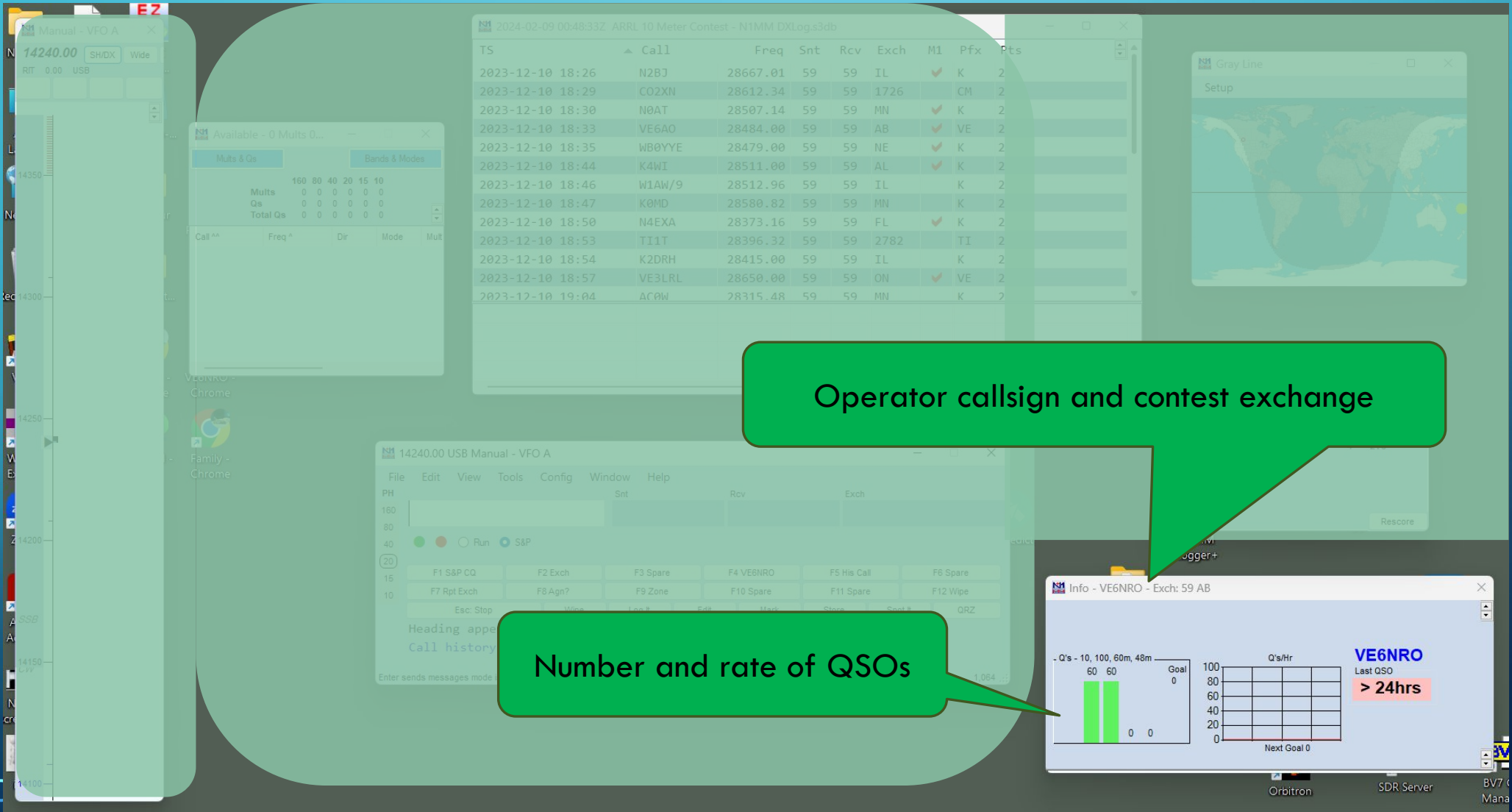
- Log Window:** Shows a list of contacts with columns for Call, Freq, Snt, Rcv, Exch, M1, and Pfx. The data is as follows:

Call	Freq	Snt	Rcv	Exch	M1	Pfx
N2BJ	28667.01	59	59	IL	✓	K 2
CO2XN	28612.34	59	59	1726	CM	2
N0AT	28507.14	59	59	MN	✓	K 2
VE6AO	28484.00	59	59	AB	✓	VE 2
WB0YYE	28479.00	59	59	NE	✓	K 2
K4WI	28511.00	59	59	AL	✓	K 2
W1AW/9	28512.96	59	59	IL		K 2
K0MD	28580.82	59	59	MN		K 2
N4EXA	28373.16	59	59	FL	✓	K 2
TI1T	28396.32	59	59	2782	TI	2
K2DRH	28415.00	59	59	IL		K 2
VE3LRL	28650.00	59	59	ON	✓	VE 2
AC0W	28315.48	59	59	MN		K 2
- Available - 0 Mults 0... Window:** Shows a table for multipliers (Mults) and total Qs for different bands (160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 MHz).

	160	80	40	20	15	10
Mults	0	0	0	0	0	0
Qs	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Qs	0	0	0	0	0	0
- Score - 1,064 Points Window:** Shows the overall contest score.

Contest: ARRL10M
Band: 28 QSOs: 28 Pts: 56 S-P: 15 Cty: 4 Pt/Q: 2.0
Total: 28 QSOs: 56 Pts: 15 Cty: 4 Pt/Q: 2.0
Score: 1,064
1 Mult = 1.5 Q's
- Info - VE6NRO - Exch: 59 AB Window:** Shows progress for a specific station.

Q's - 10, 100, 60m, 48m: 60, 60, 0, 0
Goal: 0
Q's/Hr: 0
Next Goal: 0
VE6NRO Last QSO: > 24hrs



Operator callsign and contest exchange

Number and rate of QSOs



Contest name, frequency, database (file) name

	Call	Freq	Snt	Rcv	Exch	M1	Pfx	Pts
2023-12-10 18:26	N2BJ	28667.01	59	59	IL	✓	K	2
2023-12-10 18:29	CO2XN	28612.34	59	59	1726		CM	2
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2023-12-10 19:04	AC0W	28315.48	59	59	MN		K	2

Type other station callsign RST and exchange in these boxes

14240.00 USB Manual - VFO A

Edit View Tools Config Window Help

PH [] Snt [] Rcv [] Exch []

● ● ● Run ● S&P

F1 S&P CQ	F2 Exch	F3 Spare	F4 VE6NRO	F5 His Call	F6 Spare
F7 Rpt Exch	F8 Agn?	F9 Zone	F10 Spare	F11 Spare	F12 Wipe

Stop Wipe Log It Edit Mark Store Spot It QRZ

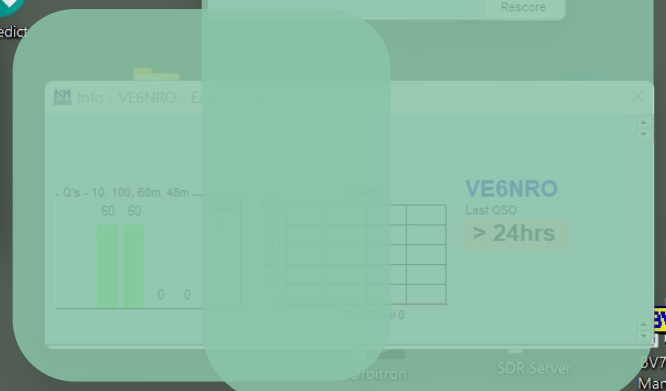
ing appears here when enabled.

Call history UserText appears here when enabled.

mode is off. 28/15/4 1,064

Function keys can be programmed to carry out specific actions

QSOs entered; Red checks indicate Multipliers applied



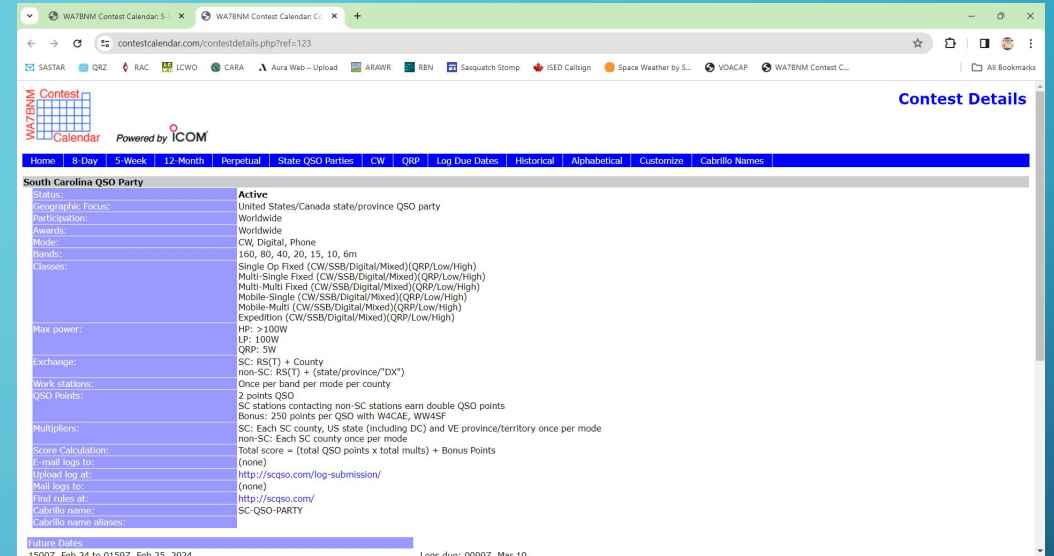
AFTER THE CONTEST

- You do **NOT** have to submit your contest logs to the organizer . If you do:
- Check the contest rules for submission dates and file formats.
- Ensure the proper format. Files submitted are usually Cabrillo format, sometimes ADI (Amateur Data Interchange); most programs generate both.
- File are either uploaded on contest website or sent by email.

RUN VS. SEARCH & POUNCE (S&P)

- Run – find a clear frequency, call CQ and start logging QSOs!
 - Advantage – can work many more stations, much faster since more stations S&P vs. Run.
- S&P - turn the dial, looking for stations calling CQ and reply.
 - Advantage – can fill in other station's callsign and exchange while waiting.
 - If you cannot hold a frequency or maintain a good run, can still work stations.
- Most contesters prefer Run and use S&P to find special callsigns and multipliers.

ON-AIR CONTEST TRAINING CAROLINAS QSO PARTY FEBRUARY 24, 25 AT VE6AO STATION



Stations inside South Carolina provide 59 + county

eg N0AB 59 Alpha November – for Anderson county

Stations outside South Carolina provide 59 + state, province or DX if outside North America

eg W7ABC 59 WY

CALLING CQ — “SEEK YOU”, LOOKING FOR QSOS, ANY TIME, NOT JUST IN A CONTEST



CONTEST QSO PRACTICE

Your turn!

Remember to log your QSO – other station's callsign, signal report and exchange.

Use phonetics.

Don't be rushed, it's more important to get the information than to be fast.

Speed will develop.

MULTIPLE SIMULTANEOUS REPLIES AKA PILEUPS

- Multiple replies to your CQ? No problem.
- If you couldn't make anything out, just say QRZ?
- If you heard part of a callsign, say that eg "ending in Bravo Charlie?"
- Keep the run going, manage the pileups and try to maintain your spot.

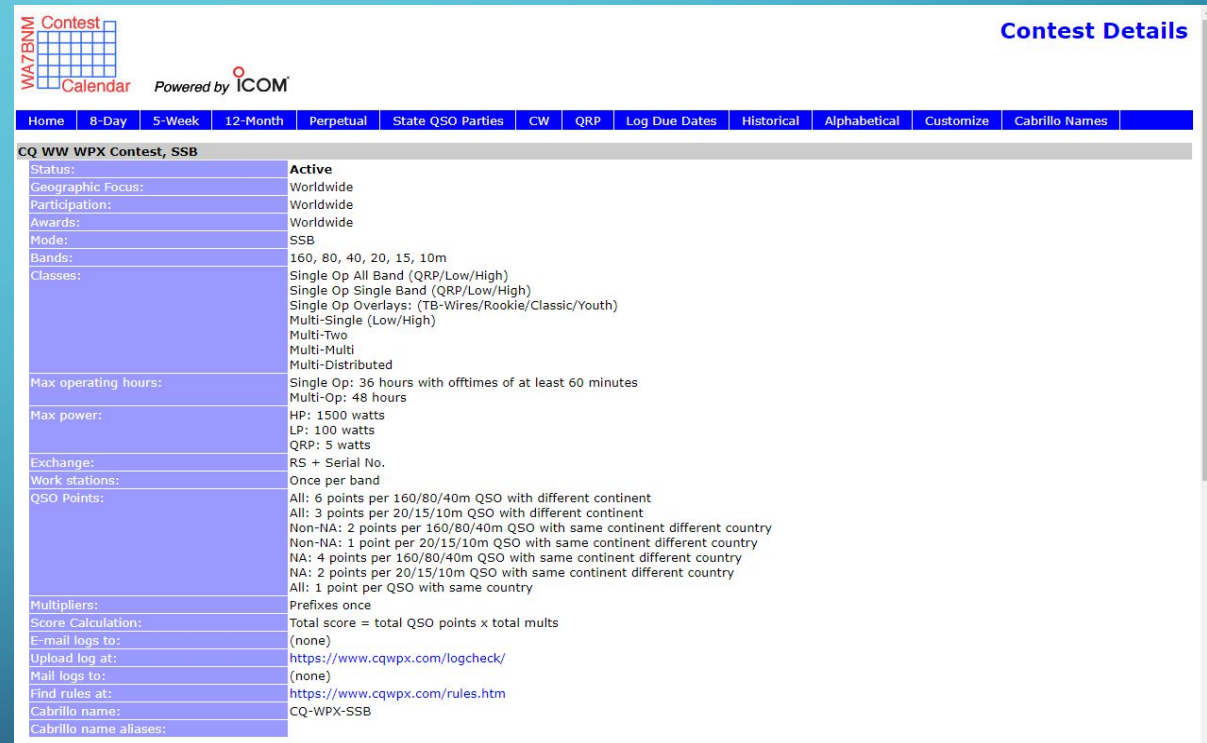
CHALLENGES

- Remember, amateur radio frequencies are for everyone to use, no one “owns” a spot, be courteous but expect courtesy as well.
- Someone may ask you to move or they may simply work over top.
- Not everyone follows the same phonetic alphabet, be flexible.
- Sometimes best to acknowledge a super loud station in a pileup so you can move on.
- Definitely ask for space if they’re interfering with a QSO eg
 - You have a pileup and hear a quiet station N7something but others keep calling over top:
 - “November Seven only please”
- The number of courteous operators (usually) exceeds the LIDS.

REGISTER ON THE CARA PAGE UNDER EVENTS CALENDAR TO OPERATE AT VE6AO FOR THE CQ WPX SSB CONTEST, MARCH 29, 30, 31

Contest exchange:
RS + consecutive serial
number

Eg N7AB 59 057



The screenshot shows the 'Contest Details' page for the 'CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB'. The page is powered by ICOM and features a navigation bar with options like Home, 8-Day, 5-Week, 12-Month, Perpetual, State QSO Parties, CW, QRP, Log Due Dates, Historical, Alphabetical, Customize, and Cabrillo Names. The main content area lists various contest parameters:

Status:	Active
Geographic Focus:	Worldwide
Participation:	Worldwide
Awards:	Worldwide
Mode:	SSB
Bands:	160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10m
Classes:	Single Op All Band (QRP/Low/High) Single Op Single Band (QRP/Low/High) Single Op Overlays: (TB-Wires/Rookie/Classic/Youth) Multi-Single (Low/High) Multi-Two Multi-Multi Multi-Distributed
Max operating hours:	Single Op: 36 hours with offtimes of at least 60 minutes Multi-Op: 48 hours
Max power:	HP: 1500 watts LP: 100 watts QRP: 5 watts
Exchange:	RS + Serial No.
Work stations:	Once per band
QSO Points:	All: 6 points per 160/80/40m QSO with different continent All: 3 points per 20/15/10m QSO with different continent Non-NA: 2 points per 160/80/40m QSO with same continent different country Non-NA: 1 point per 20/15/10m QSO with same continent different country NA: 4 points per 160/80/40m QSO with same continent different country NA: 2 points per 20/15/10m QSO with same continent different country All: 1 point per QSO with same country
Multipliers:	Prefixes once
Score Calculation:	Total score = total QSO points x total mults
E-mail logs to:	(none)
Upload log at:	https://www.cqwpvx.com/logcheck/
Mail logs to:	(none)
Find rules at:	https://www.cqwpvx.com/rules.htm
Cabrillo name:	CQ-WPX-SSB
Cabrillo name aliases:	

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

- Questions?
- This presentation will be uploaded to the CARA web page
- Register for the VE6AO Station Orientation and Practice Contest Feb 24/25.
- Register for the VE6AO CQ WPX SSB Contest March 29/30/31.
- Get on the air contest weekends and have fun!