Why Contest?

By

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2013 DFW Contest Forumn

Background template
provided by W5ZL (SK)

What We'll Cover

- Why We Contest
- A Few Myths:
  - You need a big station to participate
  - Big guns only really care about working other big guns.
- Types of Contests (How to pick one that's best for you)

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Why We Do It…

- WAS / DXCC IN A WEEKEND
- CHASING BAND COUNTRIES
- WE ARE TYPE “A” AND LOVE TO COMPETE
- PROVE OUR STATION CAPABILITY
- DISPLAY OUR OPERATING TALENT
- WE ARE JUST IN THE HABIT AND ENJOY CONTESTING

Do I Have to Have a Big Station to Operate a Contest?

Why not?

You don't have to be a Big Gun to have Big Fun contesting!

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Some Antenna Ideas

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Multiband Verticals

No matter what size station you're operating, it's a thrill to talk to somebody far away.

Contests let you do that many times in one weekend!

Little Pistol – N5TIT

30 Ft Telescoping
Fiberglass Pole

80 Meter Trap

HAMSTICK
IN THE ATTIC

Attic Multiband Dipole

Make Do..

Do the best with what you have….

Consider a .25 wavelength antenna for the band your most interested in and have space for…

No matter what size station you're operating, it's a thrill to talk to somebody far away.

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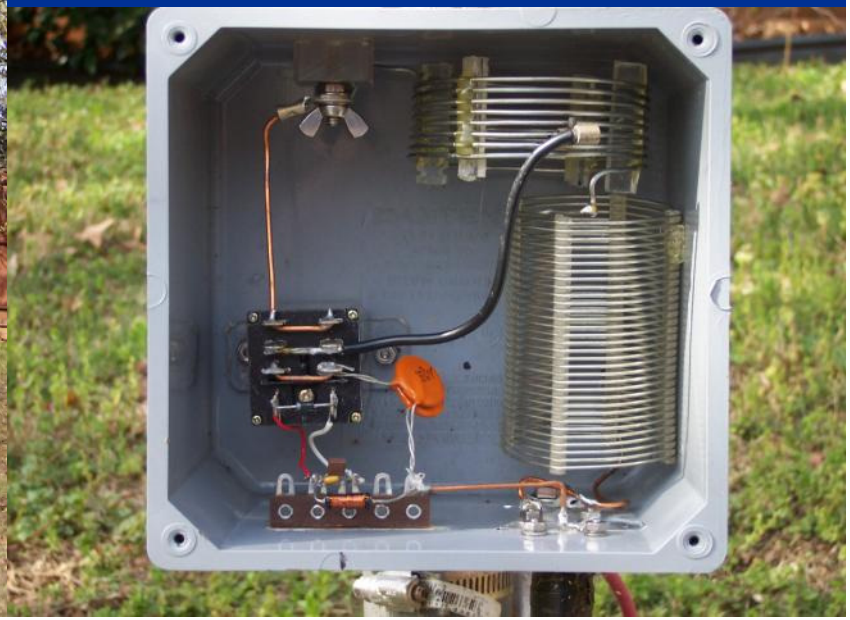
AA5TB

AC5T
30/40m
Vertical



Heavy Metal (on the other end)

No matter what size station you're operating, it's a thrill to talk to somebody far away.

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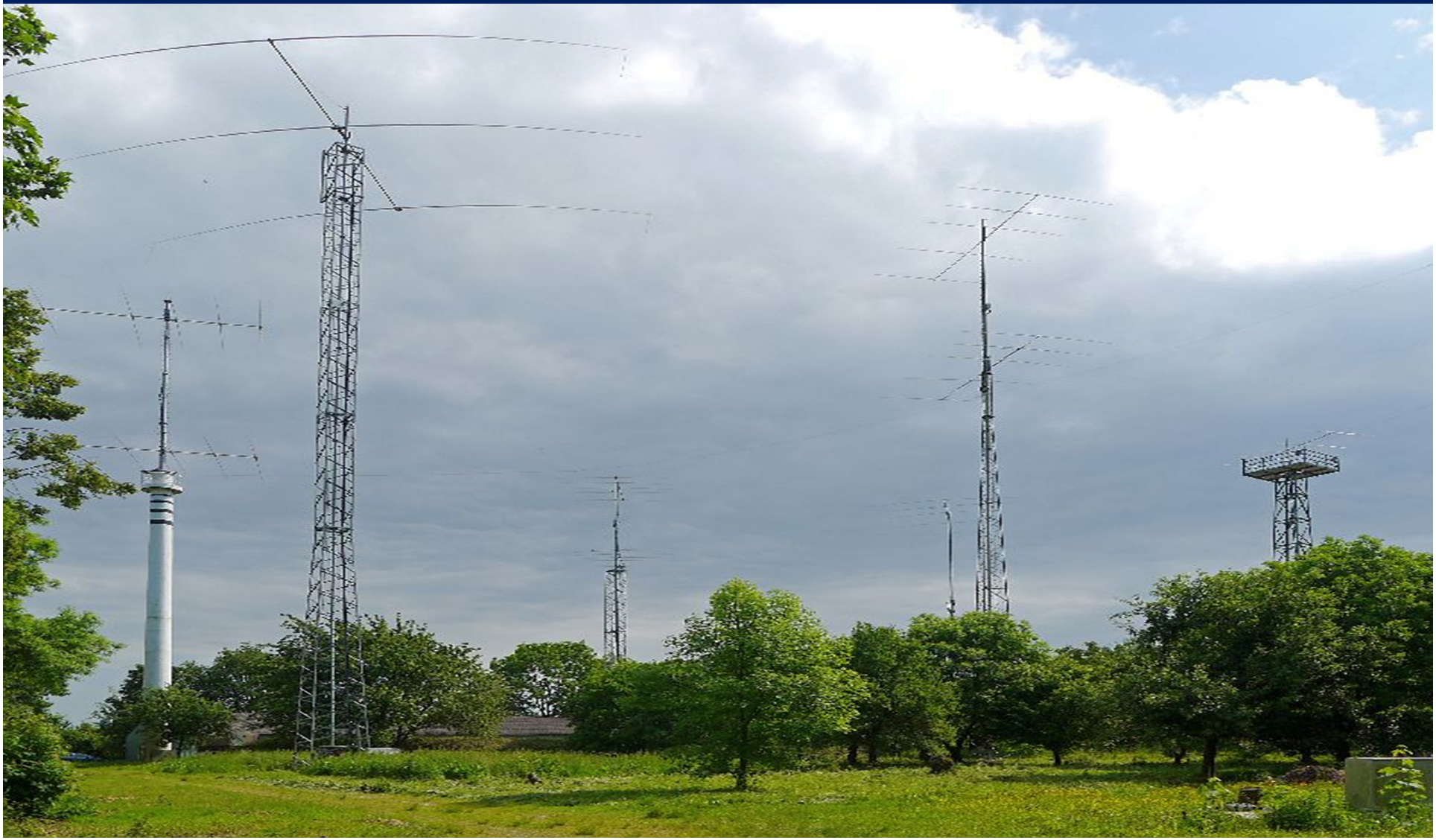
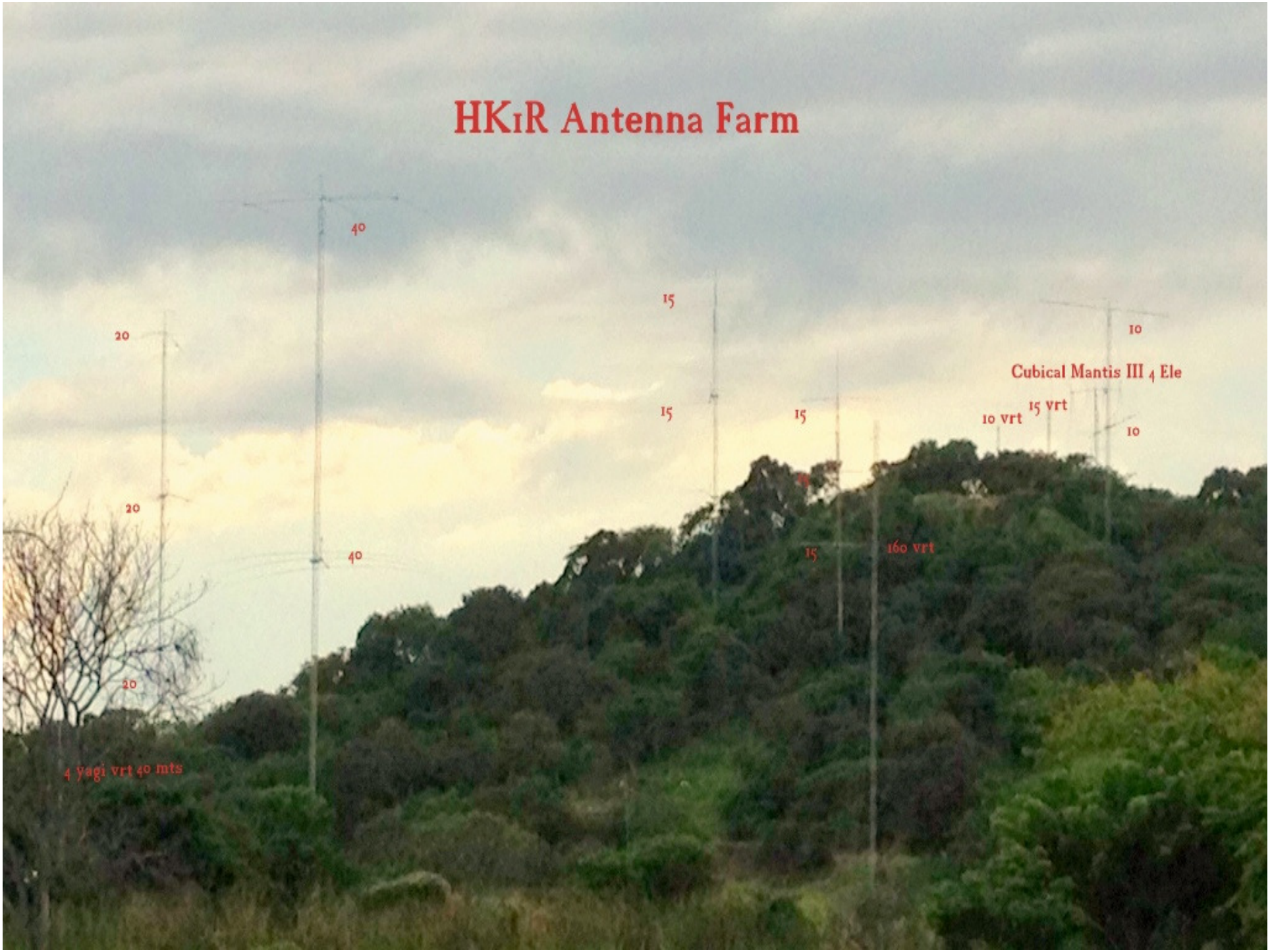
Big Gun DR1A



Big Gun 403A Montenegro

NR5M

Big Gun RD3A (Russia)


HK1R Antenna Farm
40
20
20
20
40
4 yagi vrt 40 mts
15
15
15
15
160 vrt
10
Cubical Mantis III 4 Ele
10 vrt
15 vrt
10

The Big Guns Want To Work You!

- N6TR Research indicates that 20% of Stations that are worked in SS CW will not send in a log

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Think About It…

KX9X from the ARRL Contest Desk says:

- **CW SS 2012** 881 Stations that made 10 or more QSOS and did not send in a log
- **SSB SS 2012** 2432 Stations made 10 or more QSOS without sending in a log
- Working these guys can be the difference in beating your competitor…

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The Importance of Working the Casual Contester

1673 logs were received in SS SSB

50% of those logs had fewer than 200 QSOS!

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What's Req'd to Get Started?

- A radio and antennas (Use whatever you have!)
- A logging system
  - Computer-based logging software
    - Many options from freeware to networked
      - Windows-based
        - N1MM (free) *www.n1mm.com*
        - Wintest ($50)
        - N3FJP ($39-49) *www.n3fjp.com*
        - *(MacOS and Linux versions too)*

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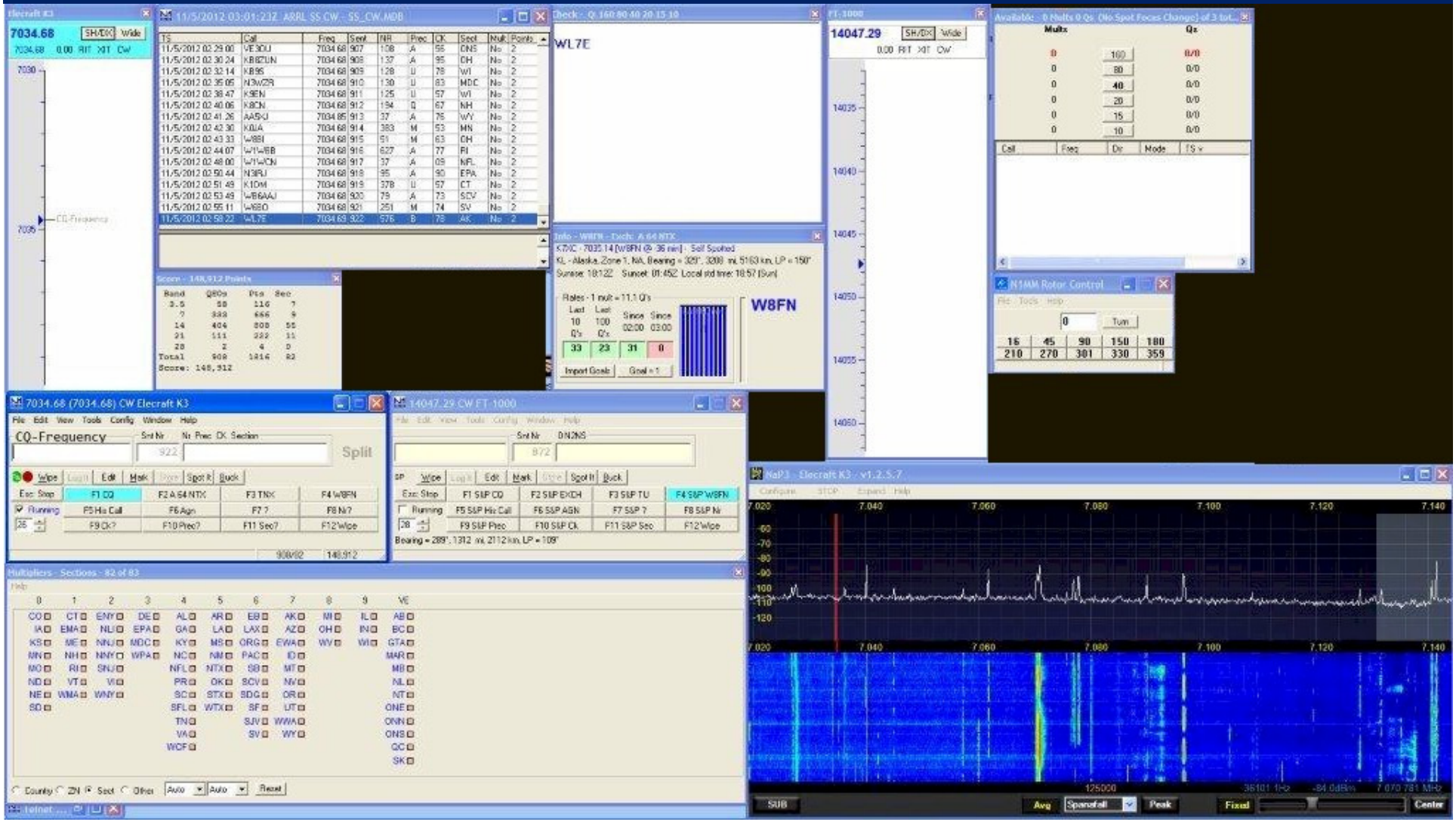
2489820
18:47

ARRL Radio Amateur Map of the World
WAS

N1MM



7034.68
WL7E
14047.29
W8FN
N1MM Rotor Control
7034.68 (7034.68) CW Elecraft K3
CQ-Frequency
Split
14047.29 CW FT-1000

How to do well in a contest

- Work a lot of stations
- Work as many “multipliers” as possible
- Work smart:

  Know what band you should be operating on

  (Understand Propagation)

  Know the limitations of your station

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Many different types of contests

- SSB, CW, RTTY
- DX *ARRL, CQWW, IARU, WPX, foreign hosted, etc.*
- National *Field Day, Sweepstakes, NAQP, VHF/UHF, State QSO Parties, etc.*
- Specialty QRP Contests (and operating events)

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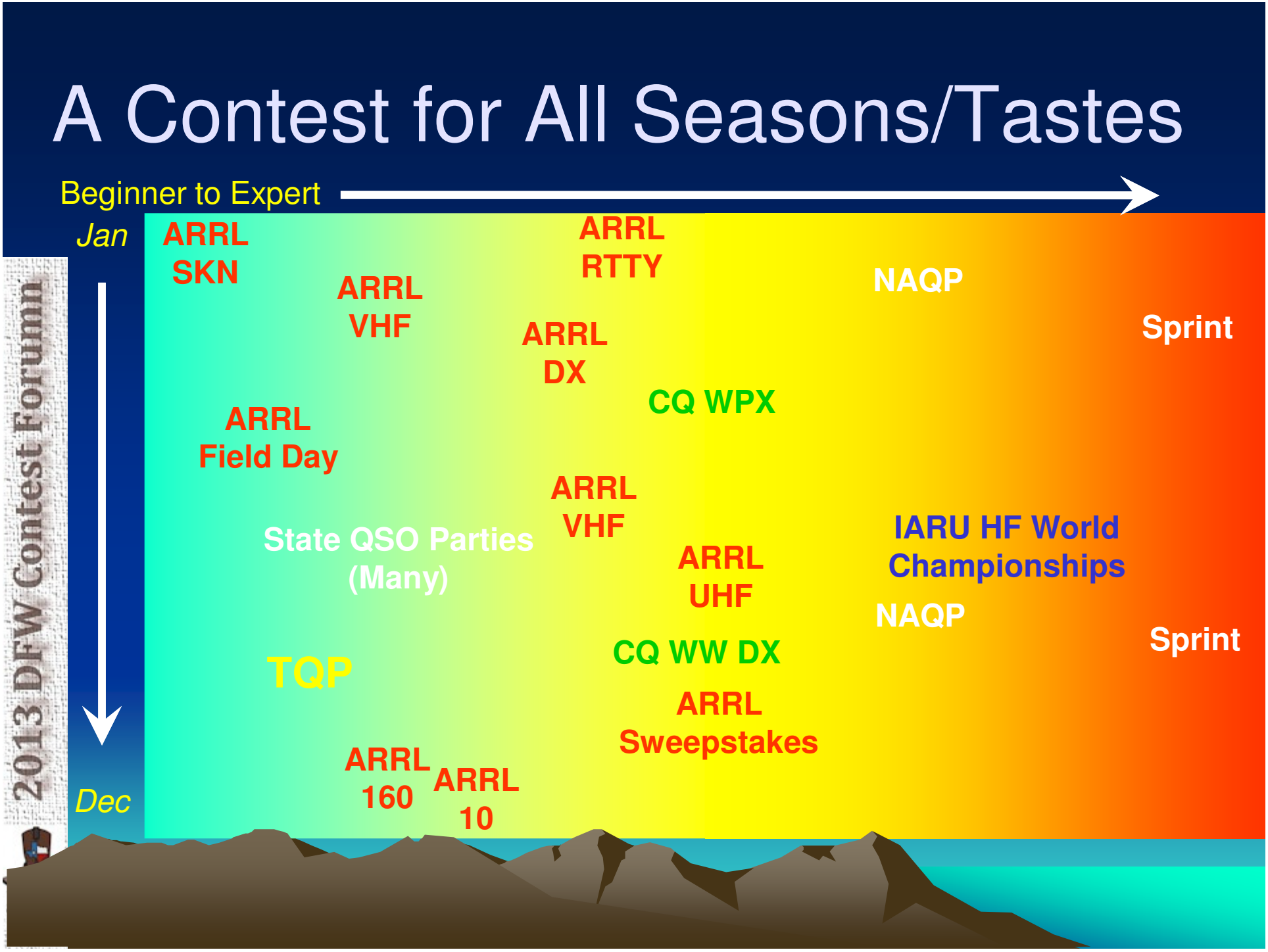
A Contest for All Seasons/Tastes



Multiple Categories

. . . designed to let you compete on a level playing field

- Single operator
  - Packet-assisted or unassisted
- Power
  - QRP, low, high
- Single band and/or mode (some contests)
- Multi-op, single transmitter
- Multi-op, multi-transmitter

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Time Commitment

- Almost always on weekends
- Starting/ending times vary by contest
  - Durations as short as 4 hours
  - As long as 48 hours
  - Maximum allowed operating hours also vary
- Good on-line contest calendar: www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/

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Best contests for getting your feet wet

- Field Day
- Rookie Roundup
- North American QSO Parties
- State QSO Parties (many!)

(Great if you are trying to get WAS or other awards)

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What Can I Win?

- Trophies, plaques, certificates
- Goodies
  - Example: WA State QSO Party "Salmon Run" category winners receive smoked salmon
- QSOs toward non-contest awards (WAS, DXCC
- *The awe and respect of your fellow competitors (aka "bragging rights")*

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The Radio Amateur's Journal

Takes pleasure in awarding this Certificate of Merit to

KE5BUS

In Recognition of the achievement of winning the

2012 World Wide WPX Contest CW

for the **Single Op Low Power 20 Meters** *division for* **#1 in Call Area 5 - USA**

A Total score of ***15,138*** *points was computed on the basis of the number of stations worked and call sign prefixes contacted. In witness of this achievement, we hereby affix our signatures on this day.*

K5ZD

CQ WPX Contest Director

W2VU

Editor, CQ

Online Contesting Resources

- DFW Contest Group www.dfwcontest.com
- ARRL *www.arrl.org*
  - *"ARRL Rate Sheet" newsletter*
  - http://www.arrl.org/contest-update-issues
- Contesting.com *www.contesting.com*
- National Contest Journal *www.ncjweb.com*

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Local Help

ARRL-affiliated "contesting" club:

DFW CONTEST GROUP

Visit: www.dfwcontest.com