

# Why Contest?

By

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Background template  
provided by W5ZL (SK)

2013 DFW Contest Forum



# 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)



# 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!*

# Some Antenna Ideas



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.*

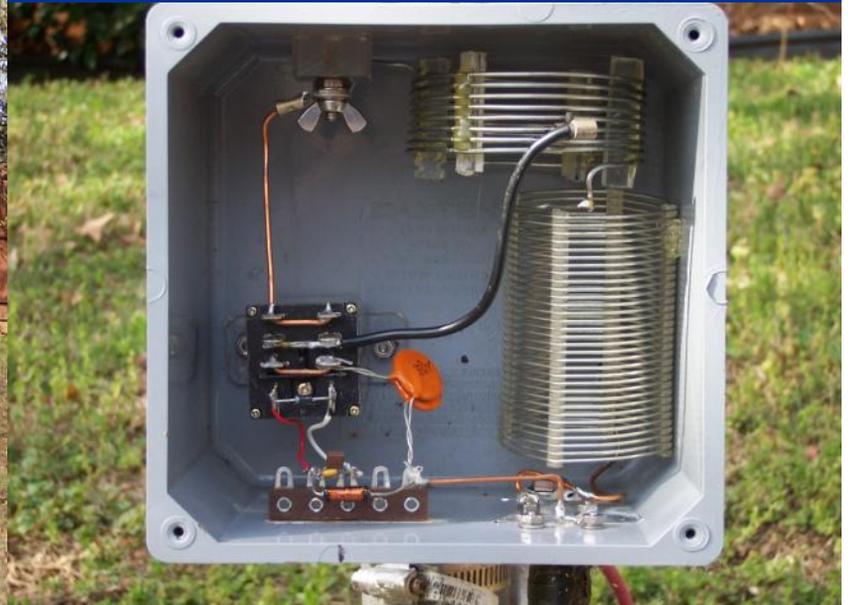
*Contests let you do that many times in one weekend!*

AA5TB





AC5T  
30/40m  
Vertical



# Heavy Metal (on the other end)



AB5K

*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!*

# Big Gun DR1A



# Big Gun 403A Montenegro





NR5M

# Big Gun RD3A (Russia)



*80 meters 3 ele*

# HKiR Antenna Farm



40

20

15

10

Cubical Mantis III 4 Ele

15

15

10 vrt

15 vrt

10

20

40

15

160 vrt

20

4 yagi vrt 40 mts

# 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...

# The Importance of Working the Casual Contester

1673 logs were received in SS SSB

50% of those logs had fewer than 200 QSOS!

# 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](http://www.n1mm.com)
        - Wintest (\$50)
        - N3FJP (\$39-49) [www.n3fjp.com](http://www.n3fjp.com)
        - *(MacOS and Linux versions too)*





# N1MM

The screenshot displays the N1MM software interface, which is used for monitoring and tracking aircraft signals. The interface is divided into several main sections:

- Top Left: Aircraft List**

7034.68 [SHR] Wide

TS	Call	Freq	Sen	HR	Pre	OK	Se	Mult	Points
11/5/2012 02:29:00	VE3OU	7034.68	907	108	A	55	DNS	No	2
11/5/2012 02:30:24	W8JUN	7034.68	909	137	A	95	OH	No	2
11/5/2012 02:32:14	W8BS	7034.68	909	128	U	75	WI	No	2
11/5/2012 02:35:05	N4CZR	7034.68	910	130	U	83	MDC	No	2
11/5/2012 02:38:47	K9EN	7034.68	911	125	U	57	WI	No	2
11/5/2012 02:40:06	N8CN	7034.68	912	154	Q	67	NH	No	2
11/5/2012 02:41:26	AASU	7034.68	913	37	A	75	WV	No	2
11/5/2012 02:42:30	K0IA	7034.68	914	383	M	53	MN	No	2
11/5/2012 02:43:33	W8BI	7034.68	915	51	M	63	OH	No	2
11/5/2012 02:44:07	W1WBB	7034.68	916	627	A	77	RI	No	2
11/5/2012 02:48:00	W1WCB	7034.68	917	37	A	09	NFL	No	2
11/5/2012 02:50:44	N3FL	7034.68	918	95	A	90	EPA	No	2
11/5/2012 02:51:49	K1DM	7034.68	918	378	U	57	CT	No	2
11/5/2012 02:53:49	W86AAJ	7034.68	920	75	A	73	SDV	No	2
11/5/2012 02:55:11	W8BD	7034.68	921	251	M	74	SV	No	2
11/5/2012 02:58:22	WL7E	7034.68	922	576	B	78	AK	No	2

Score: 148,912 Points

Band	QSOs	Pts	Sec
3.5	58	116	7
7	349	698	4
14	404	808	5
21	111	222	11
28	2	4	0
Total	908	1814	82
- Top Middle: Frequency Monitor**

14047.29 [SHR] Wide

Available: 0 Mults 0 Qs (No Spot Focus Change) of 3 to L

Mults	Qs	
0	100	0/0
0	80	0/0
0	40	0/0
0	20	0/0
0	15	0/0
0	10	0/0

Call Freq Dir Mode TS
- Top Right: W8FN Signal**

Info - W8FN - Ditch: A 64 NTC  
 47VC - 7032.14 [W8FN @ 36 min] - Self Spoofed  
 KL - Alaska, Zone 1, NA, Bearing = 329°, 300 mi, 5163 km, LP = 150°  
 Sunrise: 18:12Z Sunset: 01:45Z Local std time: 18:57 (Sun)

Rates: 1 mult = 11.1 Qs

Last	Last	Since	Since
10	100	02:00	03:00
Qs	Qs		

33 23 31 0

Import Goals: Goal = 1
- Bottom Left: Aircraft Control**

7034.68 (7034.68) CW Elecraft K3

CQ-Frequency: 922 Split

Running: PS Ha Call, F6 Agn, F7 7, F8 N7, F9 Q7, F10 Rec7, F11 Sec7, F12 Wice

908/92 148/912
- Bottom Middle: Aircraft Control**

14047.29 CW FT-1000

Srt Nr: 0N2NS

972

Running: F5 SLP Ha Call, F6 SLP Agn, F7 SLP 7, F8 SLP N, F9 SLP Phc, F10 SLP Cl, F11 SLP Sec, F12 Wice

Bearing = 289°, 1312 mi, 2112 km, LP = 108°
- Bottom Right: Spectrum Analyzer**

NaP3 - Elecraft K3 - v1.2.5.7

Conf: STCP Speed: Hk

Frequency range: 7.020 to 7.140 MHz

Amplitude range: -120 to 0 dBm

125000 36101 Hz -84.6dBm 7.070781 MHz

Sub Avg Spanfull Peak Fixal Centre
- Bottom Left: Multibeamers**

Multibeamers - Sections - 82 of 83

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 VE

CO ED CT ENY DE AL AR EB AK MI IL AB  
 IA EMA NU EPAD GA LA LAX AZ OH IN BC  
 KS ME NU MDC KY MS ORG EW WV WI GT  
 MN NH NY WPA NC NM PAC ID MA  
 MO RI SD NFL NTX SO MT MB  
 ND VT WI PR OK SCV NV NL  
 NE WMA WNY SC STX SDG OR NT  
 SD SFL WTX SF UT ON  
 TN SIV WWA ONN  
 VA SV WY ONS  
 WCF QC SKD



# How to do well in a contest

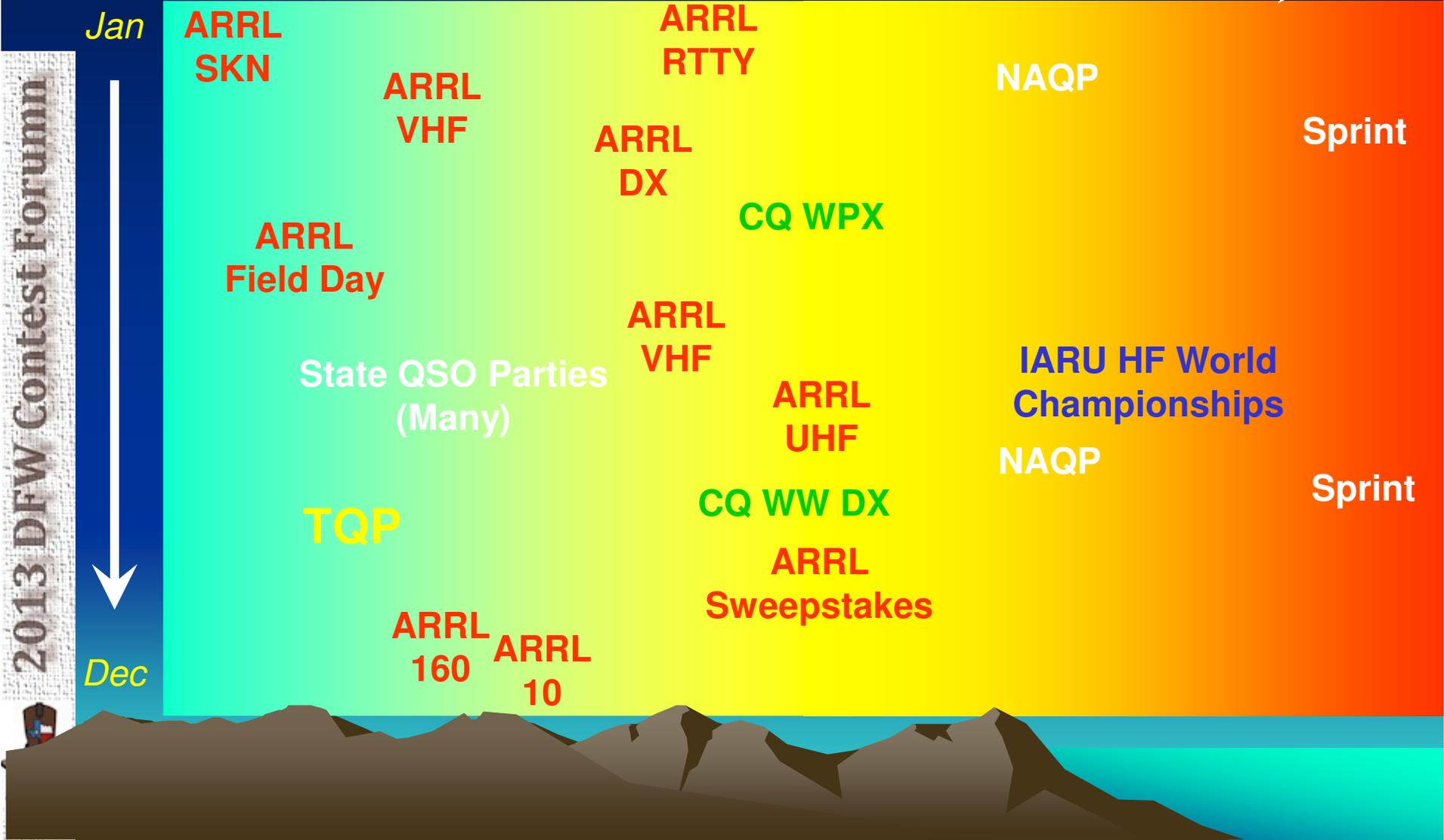
- Work a lot of stations
- Work as many “multipliers” as possible
- Work smart:
  - Know what band you should be operating on  
(Understand Propagation)
  - Know the limitations of your station

# 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)

# A Contest for All Seasons/Tastes

Beginner to Expert 



# 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

# 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/](http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/)

# 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)

# 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”)*



*The Radio Amateur's Journal*

*Takes pleasure in awarding this Certificate of Merit to*

**KE5BUS**

*In Recognition of the achievement of winning the*

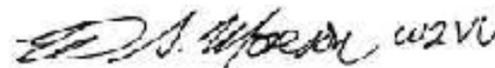
**2012 World Wide WPX Contest CW**

*for the* **Single Op Low Power** *division for* **20 Meters** **#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.*

  
K5JD

CC WPX Contest Director

  
W2VU

Editor, CQ

# Online Contesting Resources

- DFW Contest Group [www.dfwcontest.com](http://www.dfwcontest.com)
- ARRL [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org)
  - “ARRL Rate Sheet” newsletter
  - <http://www.arrl.org/contest-update-issues>
- Contesting.com [www.contesting.com](http://www.contesting.com)
- National Contest Journal [www.ncjweb.com](http://www.ncjweb.com)

# Local Help

*ARRL-affiliated “contesting” club:*

***DFW CONTEST GROUP***

*Visit: [www.dfwcontest.com](http://www.dfwcontest.com)*

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