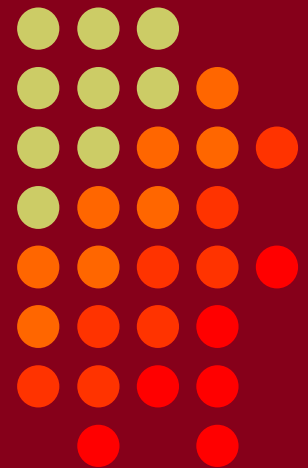


CTU Presents

It's our Radiosport Game –
Let's Play Fair

Randy Thompson, K5ZD



• CTU •
CONTEST
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ICOM®



"Contesting affords all of us worldwide a 48-hour escape to this fantasyland where politics, economics, misery, injustice, and all other suffering seem briefly distant and abstract.

Sport is escape from the burdens of everyday life. Contesting is our sport. And I'm most grateful for this sport - contesting - and the friendships and fellowship and escape it brings us."

Geoff Howard, W0CG/PJ2DX

Source: PJ2T score report for ARRL DX SSB 2024
<https://www.3830scores.com/showrumor.php?arg=RvYizV7YJnxL0U>



Purpose of this Session

- Discussion of why ethical behavior is important in radio contesting
- Understand the impact of unethical behavior
- Encourage YOU to take ownership of your behavior and encourage others to do the same



What do we mean ... Ethics?



Ethics:

“the discipline of dealing with what is good and bad, and with moral duty and obligation”

Ethics are... knowing the difference between right and wrong and choosing to do what is right.

Why do ethics matter?



Lance Armstrong

No longer the winner of 7 Tour de France titles

Another Example



Brian Davis

2010 Verizon Heritage Tournament

Sudden death playoff

Called a two-stroke penalty on himself.

2nd place...\$400k less than #1

◦ CTU ◦

**CONTEST
UNIVERSITY**

“(Brian Davis’) honor, character, and integrity were of much higher standard than most, not allowing him to accept anything less than truly ‘winning’ the tournament.” – *Golf blog*

“What Davis lost on the course will be regained in his reputation for his honorable act” – *Tournament director*

Why do you operate contests?

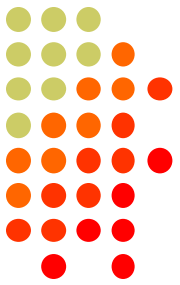


I am here today to learn, so I can...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



Sources of Motivation

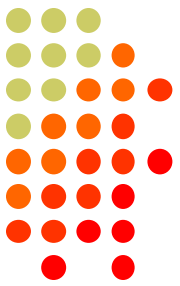
- FUN !!!
- Self Improvement
- Personal Satisfaction
- ~~Financial Rewards~~

Internal

- “Fame”
- Peer Recognition
- Winning

External

The Four Stages of Contesting



- Starting out
- Getting hooked on the game
- Trying to win
 - The right way (playing by the rules, having fun)
 - The wrong way (bending or breaking the rules)
- Passing it along

Peer Recognition



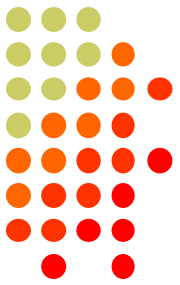
- You are recognized by your achievements and how you went about achieving those results
- Your reputation is strongly influenced by what other people say about you



Negative Peer Recognition

- “Mark uses his amp and claims low power”
- “Bill operates remote from East Coast but tells people he is in California”
- “Joe uses packet but claims unassisted”
- “Larry’s signal is always wide”
- “I hate to be in a pileup with XXXX, he never stops calling.”

While some of these examples might be hearsay – they do influence how others may see you.

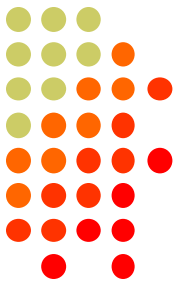


High Scores
Fame
Reputation

≠ Respect

Respect is earned through your actions and behavior

Let's face it: Contesting is not a Fair Game



- Geographic advantages
- Local terrain advantages
- Rareness advantages
- A small station in the Black Hole has a big disadvantage when compared to a mega-station in Maine

If the game is **that** important to you...



- Neutralize the competition's advantages (*within the rules!*)
- Change QTH or guest-op
- Use a remote station
- Put up better antennas
- Practice, practice, practice

At some point, you must decide



Play by the rules

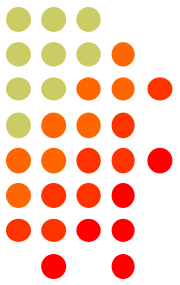
- Work on improving skills/station
- Use power consistent with class
- Don't use cluster when not allowed
- Submit log when contest ends

Make your own rules

- Work on being obnoxious
- More power (turn to "11")
- Use the cluster – who will know?
- Take time to scrub log (fix calls, add calls, "adjust" times, etc.)



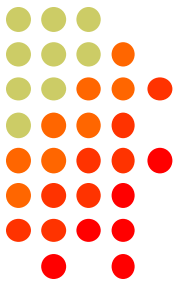
How do we know what to do?



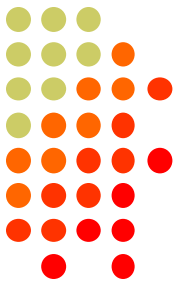
- Written Rules
 - Specified in the contest rules
 - Black and white
- Unwritten “Rules”
 - Interpreted norms
 - Gray



Some written rules are very clear (some people break these anyway)



- “A. Single Operator categories: For all single operator categories, only one person (the operator) can contribute to the final score during the official contest period.”
- “Total output power per band must not exceed 1500 watts or the output power regulations of the country in which the entrant is operating, whichever is less.”



Excessive Power

- Do not exceed power limits for your category
- Just because the knobs go to 11...
- Applies to ALL power categories
- People know if you are in “Altoids” mode



Essence of Unwritten Rules



- Just because it's not specifically prohibited in the written rules doesn't mean you can do it!
- Keep the contest on the radio and within the contest period
- Don't give or take unfair advantage

Examples of Unwritten “Rules”



- **Do not** make pre-arranged schedules
- **Do** identify frequently
- **Do not** ask friends to work you ... only
- **Do** encourage club members to work everyone
- **Do not** work friends with multiple calls
- **Do** work and spot stations equally
- **Do not** let others “help” your single-op effort

Examples of Unwritten “Rules”



- **Do not** telephone or text message multipliers
- **Do** try to help casual callers enjoy the contest and make a contact
- **Do not** plop down 100 Hertz away from your competitor to intentionally disrupt their run
- **Do not** leave CQ on auto repeat while you run down the hall...

See the ARRL's *"HF Contesting - Good Practices, Interpretations & Suggestions"*

No log washing

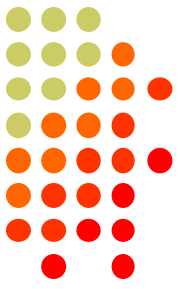
When the contest is over, put your pencil down.



Do not

- Use QRZ.com, Spot history, 3830 reports, LoTW to “correct” QSOs
- Use utilities to analyze and correct the log
- Record the contest and replay it to change log entries
- Ask others who they worked or if a callsign is correct
- Email stations you think you worked

“All the guys at the top are cheating”



No, they are not

- There are a few bad apples – this is true in any sport
- They don't last long

This belief is the primary reason for cheating -
in virtually every sport studied!

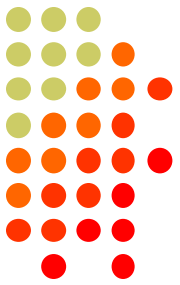
Why people cheat



- Desire to be a “hero” on the field of competition
- Achieve immortality via community legend, fame, and lasting peer recognition
- Seeking current community “stardom”
- Prove superiority over others
- A means to prove self-worth

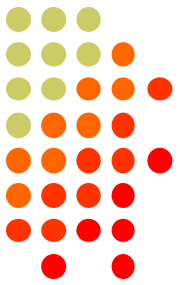
These are powerful forces!

Rationalizations for cheating



- Everybody is doing it
 - (#1 Reason, and provably false)
- Nobody was hurt
 - (Except those you beat)
- Nobody was watching
 - (Maybe not in the shack...)
- Overcome unfair disadvantages
 - (Life is not fair)
- Rules apply to others, not me/us

“I’m not a big gun...it doesn’t matter if I cut corners a bit”



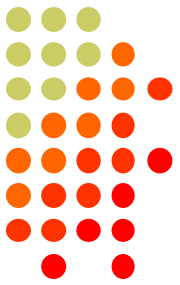
Yes, it does!

- Bad habits early on become seriously bad habits later
- Your reputation is established early
- Dealing with temptation is hard...“It’s easy to just give in! And it keeps getting easier.”

Cheating is stealing



- If you beat someone by cheating, you have stolen his award/recognition
- In nearly every culture, stealing violates the Golden Rule



Honor Code

- You are responsible for your own reputation
 - Follow the rules!
 - Don't participate with people who cheat
- Lead by example
 - You never know who is listening or watching
 - Don't do anything you would not want to be made public
- Be vocal
 - Confront cheating when you see it
 - Every incident is an opportunity to teach proper behavior

The RIGHT way to do contesting



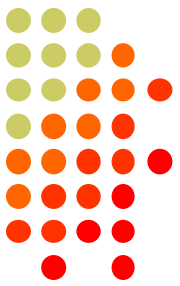
- Play fair
 - Obey the rules, remember this presentation
- Try to do better next time
 - No 'excuses'
 - Improve your skills, station
- Make your enjoyment of contesting be about the journey, not the destination



Will you commit to the Code?

- 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 dx-code.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.

Signed _____ Date _____



Who is the final judge ?

- The person in the mirror

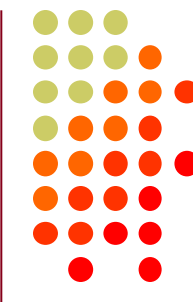


- Your peers

“Yeah, I know that guy. He cheats.”

- *Anonymous Contester*

We learned it in grade school – just follow the Golden Rule



Please play fair!

The sport of contesting depends on your integrity.

Randy Thompson, K5ZD

Acknowledgments



This presentation draws on material developed by

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