

CTU Presents

**Busting Contesting Myths to
Get Started in RadioSport**

Anthony Luscre, K8ZT

• CTU •
CONTEST
UNIVERSITY

ICOM®

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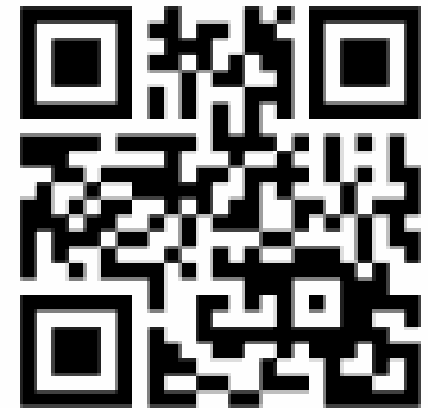




There are many slides & links so you're probably going to want to review the extended version of **Today's Presentation**

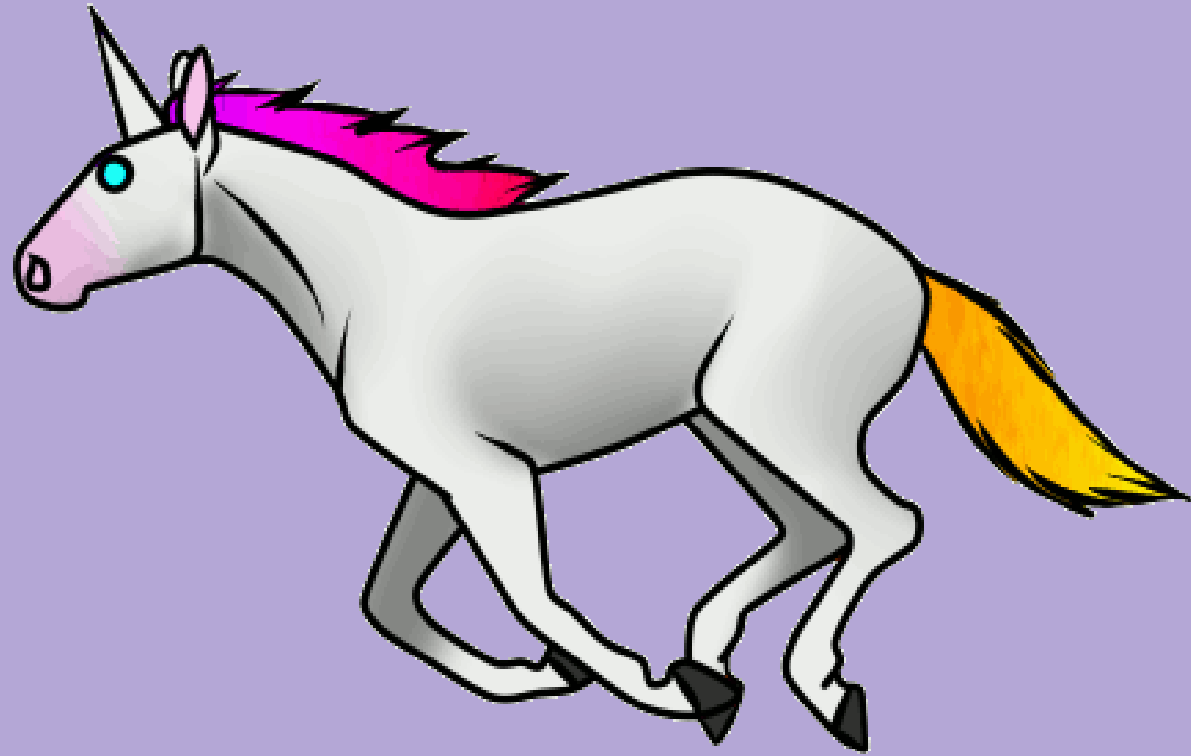
View complete slide show and access links at

tiny.cc/ctu-myths 





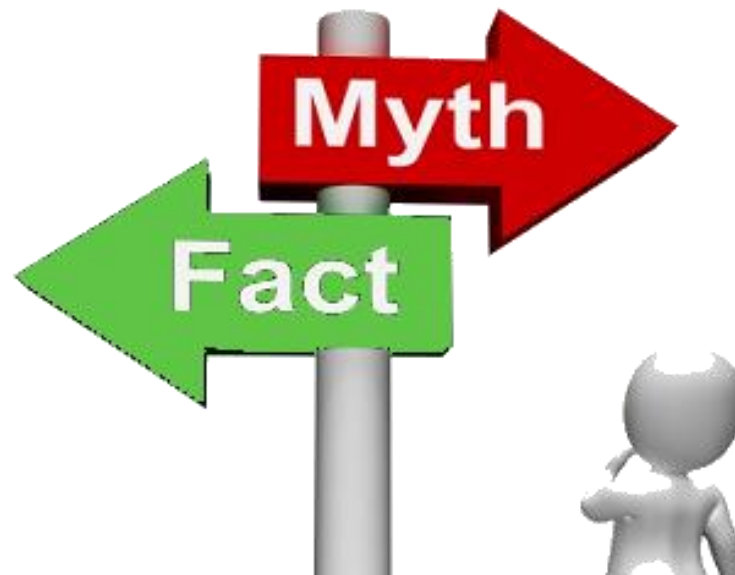
Contesting Myths



Contesting Myths



- New Contesters and even some veterans are often confused by a number of Contesting Myths









Biggest Myth of All

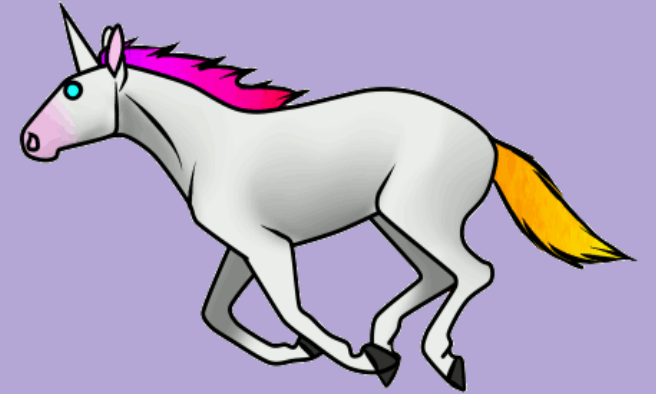


- The biggest Myth is that There is **ONLY ONE WAY** to Contest



Contesting Myths

-  You must get a Trophy/Plaque to be Successful
-  You must have a Kilowatt
-  You must have Stacked Yagis
-  You need Antennas (or Radios) that cover every band
-  There is only One Mode for Contesting
-  There is no Digital Contesting



Contesting Myths



All Contest Scoring is the Same



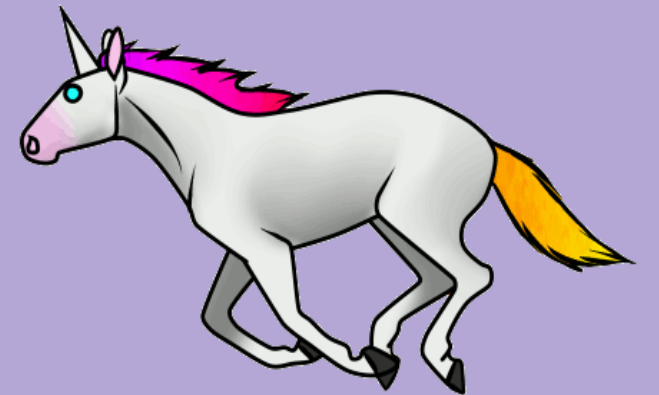
Sending in a Log with My Score would be Meaningless



There is No Way to Keep Up With All the Available Contests



There is no way to know how well I did in a contest until final results are published/posted



You must get a Plaque to be Successful



- Hams actually contest for many reasons both competitive and noncompetitive
 - **Competitive** participation means trying to finish with the highest possible score
 - **Noncompetitive** participation is focused on other Amateur Radio goals

You must get a Plaque to be Successful



● Competitive Contesting, Your Way

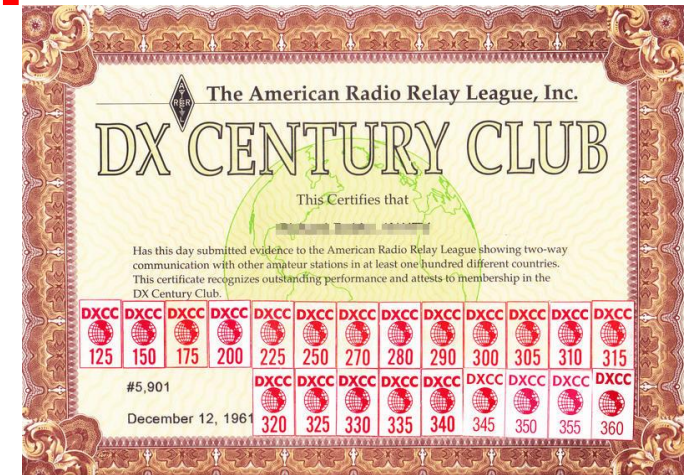
- Set your own goals
 - Surpass last year's score
 - Place first in a sub-category (high score for your state, call area, etc.)
 - Choose single-band, single-mode categories
 - Continue to improve over time

You must get a Plaque to be Successful



● Noncompetitive Contest Participation

- Award Chasing- DXCC, WAS, WAZ, etc.
 - *AJ8B - Chasing DX During a Contest*
- County hunting
- Improving operating skills
- Testing antennas, equipment, etc.
- Portable operations
- Social aspect of multi-op



You must get a Plaque to be Successful



- **How to be more Competitive & Get that Plaque**

- You are competing against yourself... Improving in each contest is the best measure of success
- Seek out a competitor who 'mirrors' your station/skills and have a friendly competition in the contest. Challenge them so you both have a goal in the contest
- Practice, Practice & more Practice

You must get a Plaque to be Successful



• How to be more Competitive & Get that Plaque

- Try entering smaller contests to have a better chance of finishing higher (i.e. State QSO Parties)
- Choose contests & categories in which you & your station are more competitive (contests favoring your region, that best match your antennas, different power levels categories, assisted vs. non-assisted categories, etc.)



You must have a Kilowatt

- Actually using a kilowatt limits you to one power entry category—probably the most competitive
 - Amplifiers only increase outgoing signals, but gain antennas work on both transmit & receive
 - If you want even more of a challenge than 100 watts give QRP Contesting a try— tiny.cc/ctu-qrp



You must have Stacked Yagis



- Having the best possible antennas is always a great start to a successful contesting station
 - But, towers and yagis are not possible for many hams
 - Recently more contests are including new restricted antenna overlay categories



You must have Stacked Yagis



● Limited Antenna Overlays

- ARRL's new *Limited Antennas Overlay*.
“... operation is limited to use of single-element antennas, such as a single vertical, an end-fed wire, or a single dipole antenna no more than 50 feet above ground at its highest point. The antenna(s) may cover multiple bands, as in the case of multiband verticals and dipoles with fan or trap constructions.”

You must have Stacked Yagis



● Overlay Categories

- There are other *overlay categories* new contesters should be aware of:
 - TB-Wire (T): tribander for 10-20m and single-element wire antennas for 40-160m
 - CLASSIC (C): single op, no assistance, 1 radio, max 24 hrs
 - ROOKIE (R): licensed less than 3 years
 - YOUTH (Y): less than 26 years old

You need Antennas (or Radios) that Cover Every Band



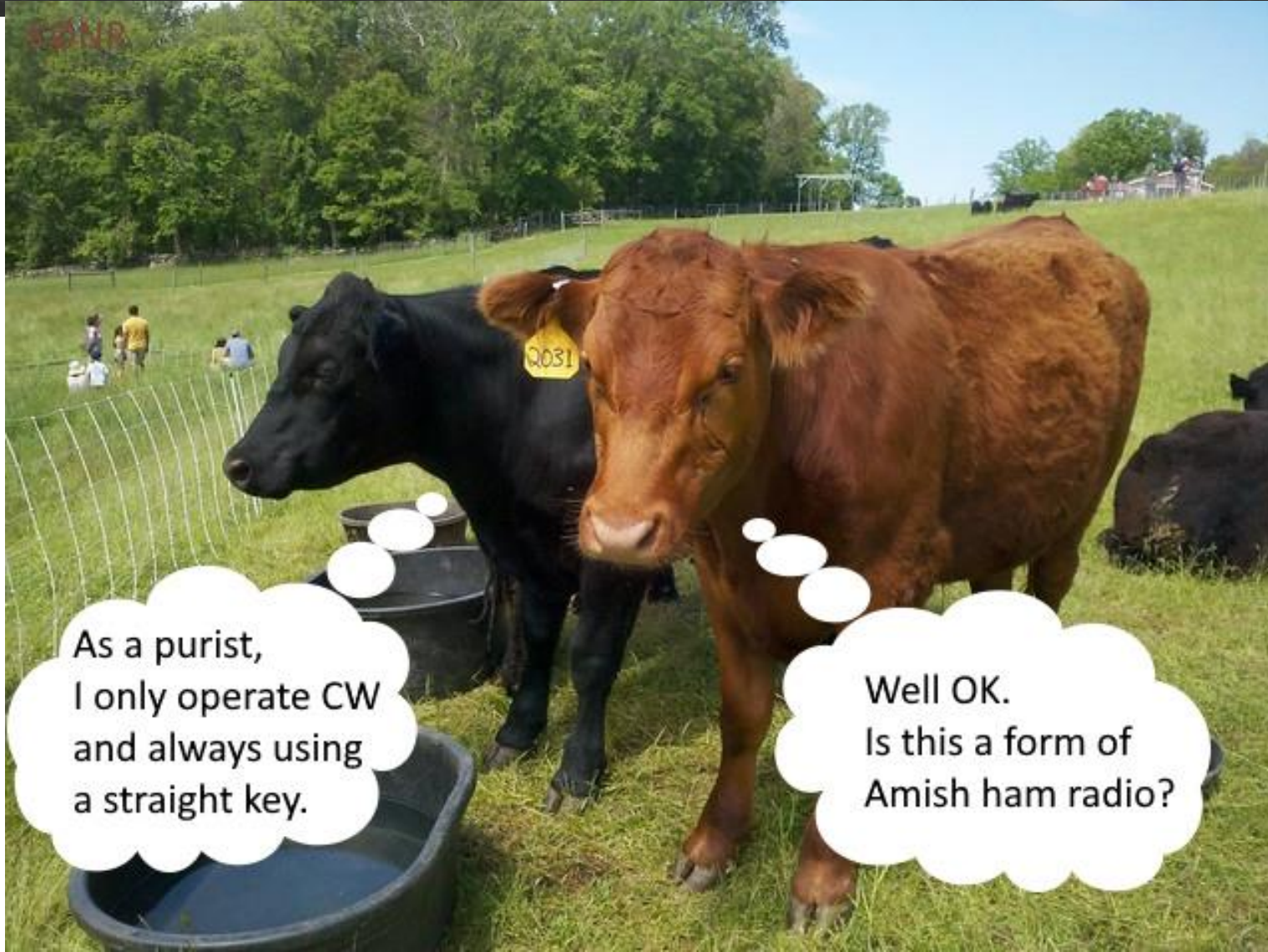
- There are single band contests
- Even in multiband contests missing one or two bands (especially lower bands in DX contests) may not affect your score that much
- Many operators in VHF/UHF contests use only two of the many bands available (there are also 3-Band & FM Only Categories)

There is Only One Mode for Contesting



- Many contesters have personal preferred modes
 - Many prefer CW, but don't let that **force your choice**
 - Don't limit yourself to a single mode and thus limit your chances for success (especially as a beginning contester)

There is only one mode for contesting



As a purist,
I only operate CW
and always using
a straight key.

Well OK.
Is this a form of
Amish ham radio?

There is only one mode for contesting



● Single Mode Contests

- CW
- SSB
- Digital
 - RTTY
 - FT8/FT4
 - PSK
 - Other Digital Modes



- Even a few contests with AM on HF & FM on VHF/UHF

There is only one mode for contesting



● Multiple Mode Contests

- Typically CW & SSB or CW, SSB & Digi
- Require some planning to optimize your scoring
 - Different point values per mode?
 - Where can you personally get best QSO Rate?
 - Operating Speed vs. # of Available potential contacts
 - How are Multipliers counted?
 - Per Contest, Band, Mode or Band & Mode

There is only one mode for contesting



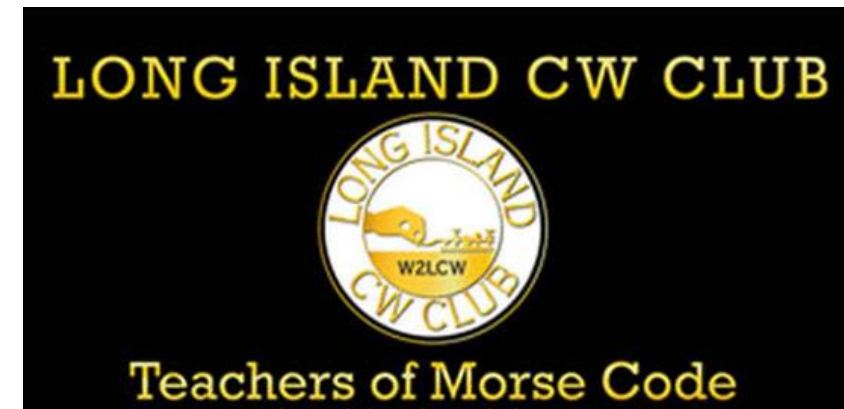
- If you really want to try CW contesting, but don't know CW

- Long Island CW Club

- Website- longislandcwclub.org
- Video- youtu.be/yhGLn3btTSo

- CWops Academy

- Website- cwops.org/cw-academy
- Video- youtu.be/yegPZTAHYJ4

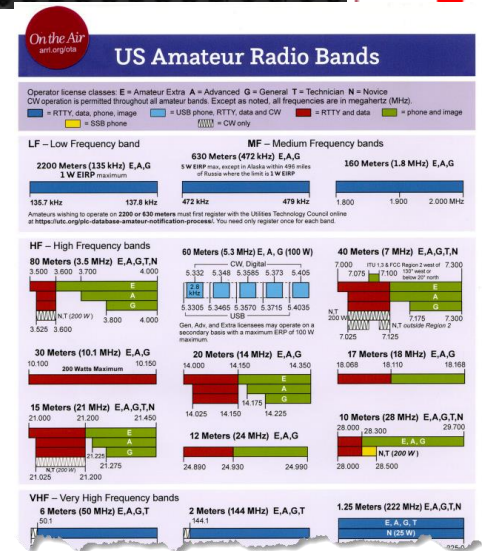


There is only one mode for contesting



● Bands for Contesting

- Typically contesters focus on multiband HF Contests
- Typically no contesting on WARC & post-WARC Bands
- But there are also...
 - Single Band Contests (esp. on 160 & 10 M)
 - VHF/UHF Contests



Maps & Charts for Amateur Radio

Anthony Luscre, K8ZT

US Amateur Radio Bands

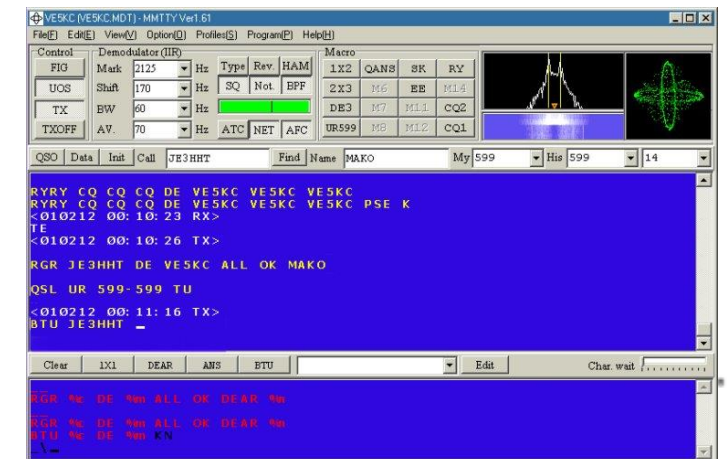
Call Sign Prefixes by Zone

Zone	Call Sign Prefix
1	N1
2	N2
3	N3
4	N4
5	N5
6	N6
7	N7
8	N8
9	N9
0	N0
A	KA, KB, KC, KD, KE, KF, KG, KH, KI, KJ, KK, KL, KM, KN, KP, KQ, KR, KS, KT, KU, KV, KW, KX, KY, KZ
B	WB, WB1, WB2, WB3, WB4, WB5, WB6, WB7, WB8, WB9, WB0
C	WC, WC1, WC2, WC3, WC4, WC5, WC6, WC7, WC8, WC9, WC0
D	WD, WD1, WD2, WD3, WD4, WD5, WD6, WD7, WD8, WD9, WD0
E	WE, WE1, WE2, WE3, WE4, WE5, WE6, WE7, WE8, WE9, WE0
F	WF, WF1, WF2, WF3, WF4, WF5, WF6, WF7, WF8, WF9, WF0
G	WG, WG1, WG2, WG3, WG4, WG5, WG6, WG7, WG8, WG9, WG0
H	WH, WH1, WH2, WH3, WH4, WH5, WH6, WH7, WH8, WH9, WH0
I	WI, WI1, WI2, WI3, WI4, WI5, WI6, WI7, WI8, WI9, WI0
J	WJ, WJ1, WJ2, WJ3, WJ4, WJ5, WJ6, WJ7, WJ8, WJ9, WJ0
K	WK, WK1, WK2, WK3, WK4, WK5, WK6, WK7, WK8, WK9, WK0
L	WL, WL1, WL2, WL3, WL4, WL5, WL6, WL7, WL8, WL9, WL0
M	WM, WM1, WM2, WM3, WM4, WM5, WM6, WM7, WM8, WM9, WM0
N	WN, WN1, WN2, WN3, WN4, WN5, WN6, WN7, WN8, WN9, WN0
O	WO, WO1, WO2, WO3, WO4, WO5, WO6, WO7, WO8, WO9, WO0
P	WP, WP1, WP2, WP3, WP4, WP5, WP6, WP7, WP8, WP9, WP0
Q	WQ, WQ1, WQ2, WQ3, WQ4, WQ5, WQ6, WQ7, WQ8, WQ9, WQ0
R	WR, WR1, WR2, WR3, WR4, WR5, WR6, WR7, WR8, WR9, WR0
S	WS, WS1, WS2, WS3, WS4, WS5, WS6, WS7, WS8, WS9, WS0
T	WT, WT1, WT2, WT3, WT4, WT5, WT6, WT7, WT8, WT9, WT0
U	WU, WU1, WU2, WU3, WU4, WU5, WU6, WU7, WU8, WU9, WU0
V	WV, WV1, WV2, WV3, WV4, WV5, WV6, WV7, WV8, WV9, WV0
W	WW, WW1, WW2, WW3, WW4, WW5, WW6, WW7, WW8, WW9, WW0
X	WX, WX1, WX2, WX3, WX4, WX5, WX6, WX7, WX8, WX9, WX0
Y	WY, WY1, WY2, WY3, WY4, WY5, WY6, WY7, WY8, WY9, WY0
Z	WZ, WZ1, WZ2, WZ3, WZ4, WZ5, WZ6, WZ7, WZ8, WZ9, WZ0

There is no Digital Contesting



- We already busted that myth
 - Check out two CTU presentations
 - Digital Contesting
 - Traditionally focused on RTTY
 - Now there are also FT8/FT4 contests
 - Other contesting Digital modes- PSK, wide variety of DSCMs (Digital Sound Card Modes)



All Contest Scoring is the Same



- No, the way contests are scored can vary widely
 - How Multipliers are counted
 - By Contest
 - By Band
 - By Mode
 - By Band & Mode
 - Contests with Double Multipliers
 - Contests with No Multipliers at all

All Contest Scoring is the Same



- No, it can vary widely
 - **Point Values per QSO**
 - Different by Modes
 - Different by Bands
 - Difference by Location of Station
 - Distance between stations (often using Grid Squares)
 - Bonus Stations

All Contest Scoring is the Same



- No, it can vary widely
 - **Power**, in addition to separate entry categories or in lieu of separate entry categories
 - Multiplier by power level of transmitting station (typically <5, <100, >100)
 - Multiplier for working QRP stations (Stew Perry 160)

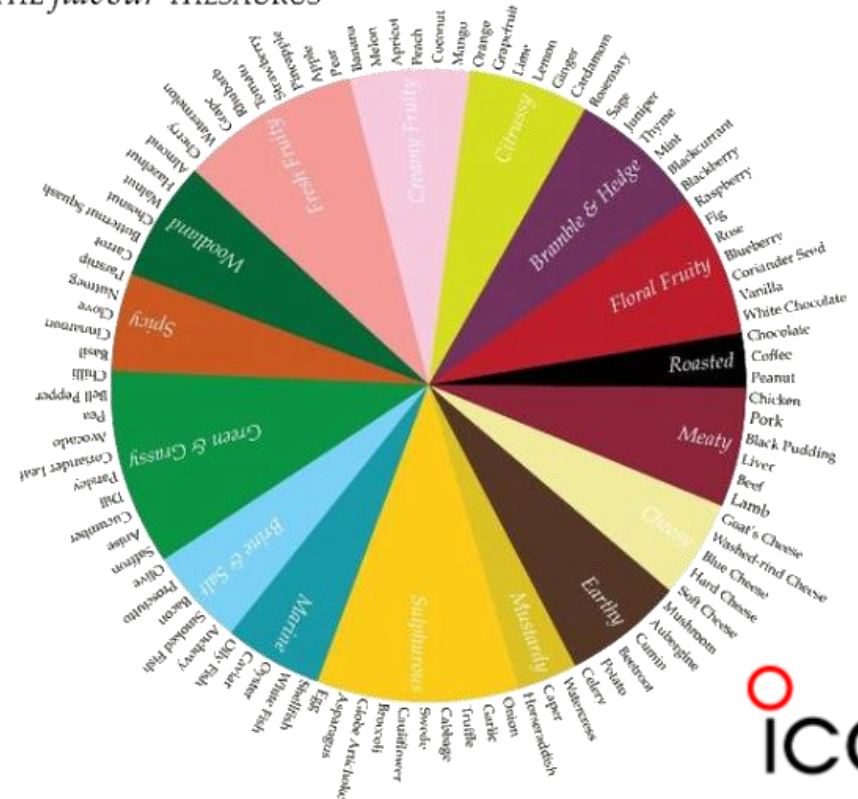
All Contest Scoring is the Same



- Not only can scoring be different, different contests have different “flavors”, each with its own subtle differences

- This is one of the great things about contesting, providing opportunities for hams with different tastes.

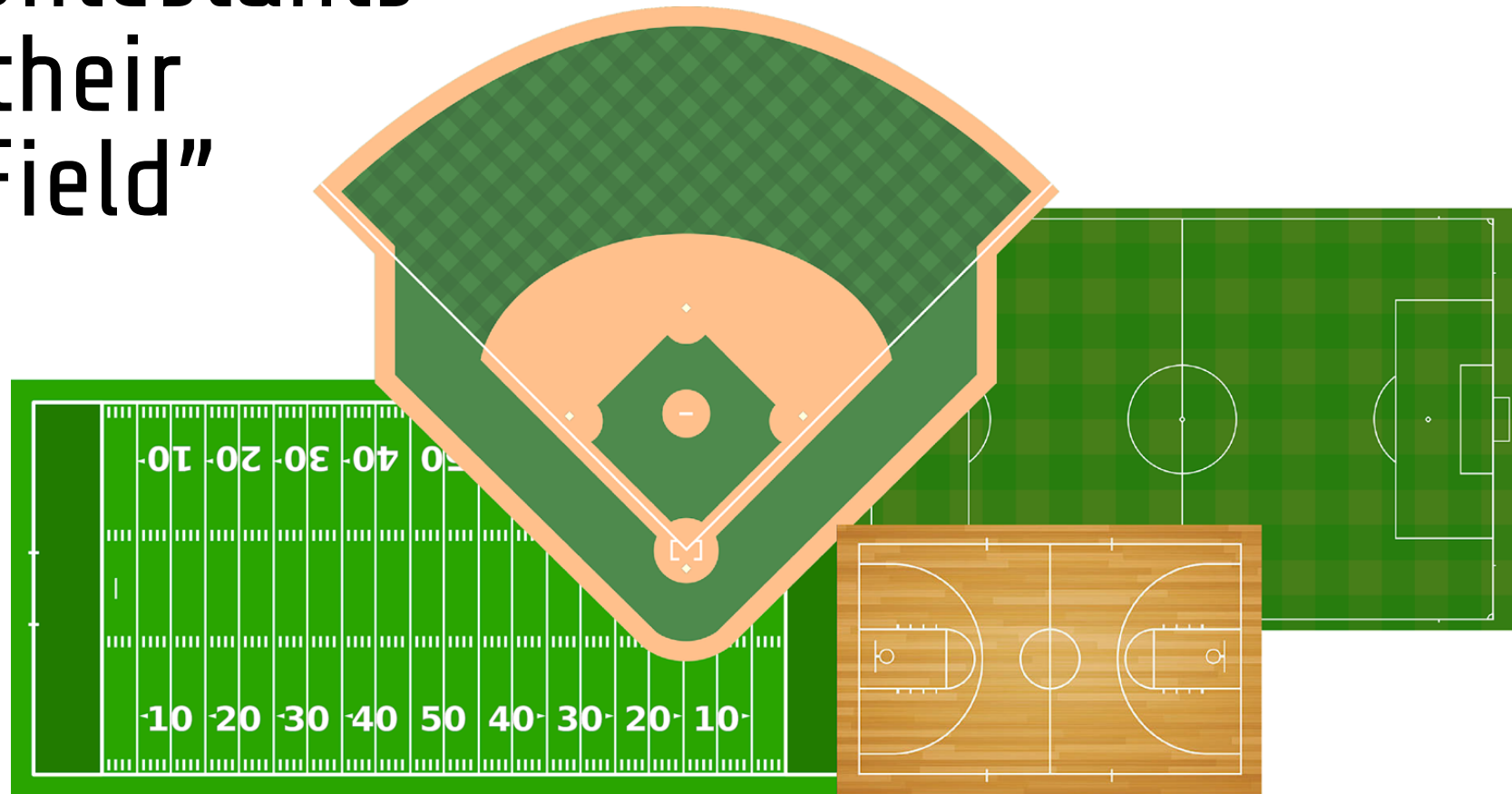
THE *flavour* THESAURUS



All Contest Scoring is the Same



- Unlike most other sports competitions, in Radio Sport, contestants get to choose their own “Playing Field”



All Contest Scoring is the Same



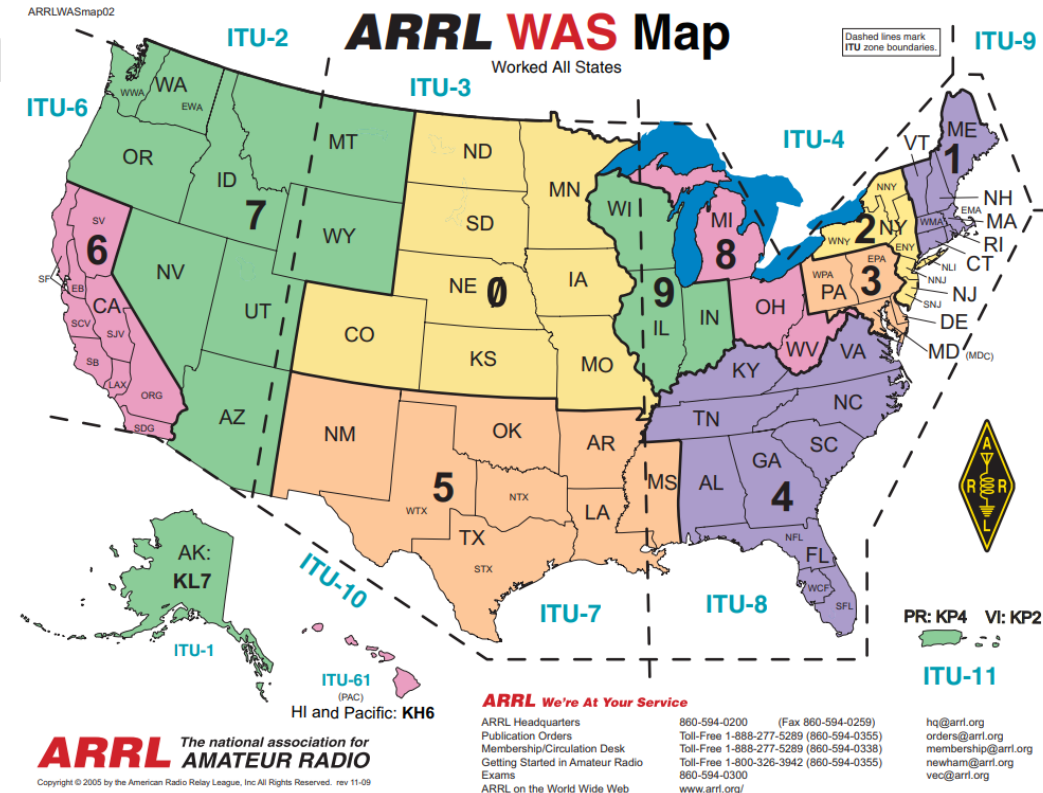
- By choosing specific contests and entry categories you can best match your...
 - Interests & Modes
 - Operating skills
 - Radio equipment & antennas
 - Level of competitiveness



All Contest Scoring is the Same



- You can also choose specific contests that also favor...
 - Your Geographic Location
 - Specific Bands
 - Increasing your DXCC, WAS, etc. totals
 - Winning or finishing in a top spot



All Contest Scoring is the Same



- Avoiding the **Multipliers Only Trap**
 - Although multipliers can be important you still need **points** to **multiply** them by

$$\text{Points} \times \text{Multipliers} = \text{Score}$$

- The more stations you work the better your score
- That is also why QSO Rate & BIC Time is so important

All contest scoring is the same



- Multiple Factors lead to contest scoring success

Factors Contributing to Contest Scoring Success		
1	Number of QSOs	Running (Calling CQ) with prolonged high rates is key to high numbers
2	Point Values of QSOs	Can be greatly influenced by Geographic Location
3	Multipliers	Importance to Final Score influenced by individual Contest's Rules
4	Secondary Multipliers	Varies by Contest, may include Power and/or Mode multipliers, Multipliers by Band, by Mode or One Time, Scoring by Distance, Bonus Points for working certain stations or station types
5	Accuracy	Avoiding UBNs, Lost Points, Lost Multipliers, Penalties, etc.
6	Competition	Who you are competing against varies by year, category, etc.

Sending in a Log with My Score would be Meaningless



- Actually you never know; your score could be the highest one in your category
 - Or at least highest in your State, Division or Section
 - This is even more likely if you are in a rare location, smaller entry category or an overlay category

■ Certificate on right was from an entry using an FT-817 & the included 6 Meter Rubber duck whip



Sending in a Log with My Score would be Meaningless



- **Sending in a Log can have Additional Perks**
 - Your call will start to get included/recognized
 - In Super Partial Check (SPC)
 - By those that sponsor the contests
 - By those that read the results
 - By local Contesting Clubs
 - In addition to submitting your log to contest sponsor make sure to submit all results to 3830 website

There is No Way to Keep Up With All of Available Contests



- There are actually a number of great websites, bulletins & journals that can keep you up on what is going on in the contesting world

The image displays a comprehensive grid of resources for amateur radio contesting, organized into several columns. The resources include:

- Calendars:** DX WORLD EXPEDITIONS TIMELINE, CQ/X de NO5W, USA County Overlays for Google Maps, State-based County Outline Maps, World Wide Digi DX Contest, State & Province QSO Party Calendar, CQ Contests, ARRL Contest Calendar, Ham Radio Contest Calendar, WA7BNM Contest Calendar.
- Contesting:** Amateur Radio Contesting FAQ, Amateur Radio Country Files, NG3K Contesting Resources, Super Check Partial, VA3RJ, DX ZONE Contesting Resources, NCJ National Contest Journal, ARRL Contesting Basics, ARRL Contest Update Newsletter, Florida Contest Group Tips, Contest University, K8CX QSL Museum, K8CX Ham Gallery, K1TTT, My First Ham Radio Contest Contact! W5BIO, WM5R, K5ZD Radiosport Aficionado, International Prefix Hunt, electronicsnotes Contesting Tips, CQ DX MARATHON, K1BV's DX Awards Website, A Guide to Ham Radio Contesting - W4PHS, K3LR LINKS PAGE, N6TV.
- Spotting-Propagation-Band Mapping:** DXcluster.Info TELNET DIRECTORY, BeaconSee, DXcluster.Info Year 100 Club Features Connection, OACAP Online Prediction Services, real-time maps, DXSCAPE, CW Club FIRM Spotter, PSK & JT Automatic Propagation Reporter, UASPnet, REVERSE BEACON NETWORK, DXWATCH.COM, HamSpots by VK3AMA, Propagation Resource Sites, FLcluster, VE3SUN DX Monitor, Simon's DX Cluster SDR-Radio, DX Spotting.
- Clubs & Organizations:** Mad River Radio Club, NORTH COAST CONTESTERS, Contest Clubs Around the World, THE RADIO CLUB OF AMERICA, K9LR MULTI-MULTI CONTENT STATION, Potomac Valley Radio Club, Yankee Clipper Contest Club, Northern California Contest Club, The Society of Midwest Contesters, ARIZONA OUTLAW.
- Software:** W1VE's Syn-DVK for N1MM, Athena for N1MM, Win-Test, UcxLog by DL7UCX, WriteLog for Windows, HamRacer Contest Logger, AIO Contest Logging Software by W4BKNC, Mortty, Logs over 375 Contests, K3 FSK Using KY Codes with N1MM, RUMPed, Skookum-Logger, SM4XA5 CSV to ADIF Converter, F5BU ADIF Utility, Athena - PC5M, DF3CB.com Fast Log Entry (FLE), ADIF File Processor W3ZJ, So2sdr, CBS-Cabrillo Statistics.
- Other Tools:** ARRL LOTW Query, W3KM ADIF PreFix Calculator, Cabrillo Electronic Contest Log, 14UFH CONTEST LOG CONVERTER, ADIF County Conversion, ADIF Master, F5BU ADIF Utility, ADIF File Processor W3ZJ.

There is No Way to Keep Up With All of Available Contests



● Contest Calendars



There is No Way to Keep Up With All of Available Contests



● News, Bulletins & Journals

- *ARRL Contest Update*
- *National Contest Journal*
- *NG3K- Contesting*
- *K8ZT.com Contesting*
- *DXnews- Contesting*



There is No Way to Keep Up With All of Available Contests



● Contesting & Other AR News

- Video – youtu.be/iF59esKcfRs
- Slideshow – tiny.cc/qst-arn

Keeping Up with Amateur Radio News & Events



Anthony Luscre, K8ZT



There is no way to know how well I did in a contest until final results are published/posted



- For the **Final Results, You do need to wait** for them to published/posted, **but...**

- There are many other ways to assess your relative scoring/finishing position...
 - During the contest
 - Before posting of final results

2022 CQWW DX SSB
TOP SCORES
WORLD

QRP	
All Band	
28,710	K8ZT349,160
235,766	HG6C (HA6IAM)279,405
217,464	JH1OGC264,252
207,800	UR5FEO263,228
202,332	MI5JYK226,252
173,606	JH7UJU189,981
158,025	DK8R167,555
136,504	M7XTT166,014
133,932	W6QU (W8QZA)131,130
126,336	SO2U125,292

How Am I Doing ?



- Online Live Contest Score Boards

- During the contest you can:

- Participate in real-time contest score websites like [CQ Contest.net](#) & [Contest Online Scoreboard](#)
- You can use Contest Score Distributor ([scoredistributor.net](#)) to post to multiple scoreboard sites

Score Distributor
Distributing contest scores in real time to online scoreboards

[Home](#) [Instructions](#) [Developer Info](#)

Contest Online ScoreBoard
Login or Register Powered by ICOM

Menu

- A1Club AWT
- CWops Mini-CWT 1
- MINITEST
- ... a few more contests for you!

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How AM I Doing ?

- Participate in real-time contest score websites like *CQ Contest.net* & *Contest Online Scoreboard*

Contest Online ScoreBoard 26 Mar 2022 20:28 UTC CQ WPX
On air: CQ WPX SSB Go Highest rate: 408 q/h by ND7K

Home Login Filter View Clear Filter Breakdown Clubs Teams Manual

SO-ALL LP PHONE	Score	QSO	Prefixes	Last	
1 CF2Z (VA2CZ)	1,812,208	964	593	00:00	Yankee Clipper Contest Club
2 WP3C (N2TTA)	1,649,850	1,193	510	00:03	
3 VE4VT	1,501,302	989	473	00:00	Radiosport Manitoba
4 KP2B (EB7DX)	1,340,864	994	511	00:01	Florida Contest Group
5 NT0K (KC1KUG)	988,505	807	463	00:01	Arizona Outlaws Contest Club
6 ZF5T (LU8EOT)	917,532	848	396	00:03	
7 N8CWU	689,400	659	383	00:01	Madison County Amateur Radio Club OHIO
8 PA9M	581,224	537	388	00:02	Bavarian Contest Club
9 R9MA	525,074	435	319	11:49	Arctica
10 LS5H	416,916	465	333	00:47	LU Contest Group
11 KM4SII	358,501	472	299	00:00	Potomac Valley Radio Club
12 KC2GOW	279,156	370	258	00:00	Frankford Radio Club
13 LX1ER	262,845	374	295	00:00	Interest Group RTTY
14 DO4OD	255,920	351	280	04:18	Bavarian Contest Club
15 KA4RRU	246,050	351	259	00:00	Potomac Valley Radio Club
16 PY5QW	238,554	326	261	00:09	Assicacao dos Radioamadores do Parana
17 4X1ST	212,310	288	210	01:24	IARC
18 WA3LXD	199,800	307	222	00:00	Silver Springs Radio Club
19 2E0INN	167,825	340	245	00:01	
20 W5EA (K1XX)	161,588	200	200	00:00	South East Contest Club

Live Score 615 Contests Regional Users Help 16:35 20:35 UT Login

CQ World-Wide WPX Contest SSB OVERALL

#613	Call	Score	QSO	Mult	Pwr	Asst	Elaps
SINGLE-OP ONE ALL							
	UP0L	5,628,714	1,946	854			0:04
	VC2A	5,266,282	1,949	778			0:00
	KT5J	4,284,119	2,338	833			0:00
	HG3R	4,048,338	1,653	791			0:01
	HG8R	4,026,265	1,752	785			0:00
	OM7M	3,953,412	1,709	772			0:00
	IR4M	3,916,487	1,685	701			0:00
	FM5BH	3,608,733	1,655	633			0:02
	LZ5R	3,411,265	1,581	715			0:00
	AA3B	3,357,000	1,580	746			0:01
	SN7Q	3,332,133	1,618	699			0:00
	4X6FR	3,242,904	1,494	679			0:01
	OK7W	3,195,390	1,507	690			0:00
	SN7D	3,158,176	1,675	736			0:00

CT
CONT
UNIVER

OM

How Did I Do ?



- 3830 Website

- While you may be waiting months for results, in the meantime you can:

- After the contest- post your scores & monitor other's results on "contest score rumor" sites like

- 3830 Scores*

- Video- youtu.be/Lwfe6c4T_BA

- Slideshow- tiny.cc/3830



Questions / Comments ?

View this slideshow and access all resources links at

tiny.cc/ctu-myths

If you need a PDF copy click [here](#)



Presentations

- If your local club is interested in an online presentation I am currently offering multiple options, for a list visit

tiny.cc/k8zt-p

- Email me if interested
k8zt73@gmail.com

This list- tiny.cc/k8zt-p	Slideshow	Video
Amateur Radio Logging- ARRL Webinar	tiny.cc/arrl-log	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...
Choosing Your Ideal Callsign- QSO Today Expo 2021	TBA	TBA
Dx Engineering Interview by K3LR- K8ZT		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...
Field Day in Social Distancing	tiny.cc/fdsd	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...
FT8/FT4 Digital Modes	tiny.cc/ft8ft4	
Fun with Morse	tiny.cc/fwm	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...
Intro to AR Contesting	TBA	TBA
N1MM Contesting Software- Elmering Day	tiny.cc/n1mm-el	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...
Pandemic Ham Radio Activities An Opportunity to Grow- RATPAC	tiny.cc/clubcovi	Jan 27, 2020
QRP Amateur Radio	tiny.cc/qar	
QSLing In Digital World	tiny.cc/qx3	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...
Radio, Radio, Radio- 100 yrs of Commercial Broadcasting	tiny.cc/rrradio	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...
RATPAC Programs Listings	tiny.cc/ratpac-list	
RATPAC- Ham Radio- Online Meeting Resources	tiny.cc/hromr	https://vimeo.com/...
Software & Web Resources for Contesting	tiny.cc/gl-contest	
State QSO Party Challenge	tiny.cc/stqspc	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...
Technicians, Life Beyond Repeaters	tiny.cc/btech	
Top Secret Techniques to WAS & DXCC	tiny.cc/ham50	
Youth in Amateur Radio	tiny.cc/yiar	