



Contest Operating Basics

Getting Started in Contesting

John Dorr, K1AR

cqk1ar@gmail.com



We all had to begin somewhere!

Northeast
HamXposition

FCC FORM 660
AUGUST 1963

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20554
AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE

☐ Not Transferable

OPERATOR PRIVILEGES: NOVICE

CALL SIGN: WN2LQZ

EFFECTIVE DATE: 09-16-69 EXPIRATION DATE: 09-16-71

JOHN H DORR
66 RUDDER DR
HOLTSVILLE N Y 11742

STATION LOCATION: SAME AS ABOVE

REMOTE CONTROL LOCATION: NONE

John H. Dorrr Ben F. Waple
(Licensee's Countersignature) SECRETARY

THIS LICENSE ISSUED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS ON REVERSE SIDE

mini-CTU
**CONTEST
UNIVERSITY**

DX
ENGINEERING



And, we all had our first contest!!

Northeast HamXposition

Novice Roundup

Call WN2LQZ Section NLI (See page 6 Q)

SENT										RECEIVED										SENT										RECEIVED									
B A N D	DATE ON OFF TIMES	GMT QSO TIME	NR	SEC	NR	CALL	SEC*	B A N D	DATE ON OFF TIMES	GMT QSO TIME	NR	SEC	NR	CALL	SEC*	B A N D	DATE ON OFF TIMES	GMT QSO TIME	NR	SEC	NR	CALL	SEC*																
15	0171 to 0045	0016	1	1	2	W1G6FA	CR6	40	01205	218	26	NR41	5	W1R21																									
		0028	2		5	W1G6FA	SCV			1217	27		14	W1B46																									
		0032	3		3	W1G6FA	E.84			1237	28		43	W1R21																									
	FF 0040	0037	4		3	W1G6FA	N.102			1250	29		7	W1R21																									
	ON 0100	0102	5		18	K0Q1X	COLO			1300	30		5	W1R21																									
		0109	6		3	W1R21	NLI			1324	31		32	W1R21																									
		0118	7		3	W1R21	STB			1341	32		21	K2V6																									
40	0130 OFF	0125	8		6	W1R21	IND			1344	33		2	W1R21																									
	ON 0155	0156	9		18	K4CAX	NLI			1347	34		60	W1R21																									
		0200	10		18	K8HAM	MIC			1357	35		6	K2DN																									
	OFF 0230	0207	11		7	W1R21	OH			1405	36		24	W1R21																									
	ON 0235	0230	12		8	W1R21	OH			1407	37		1	W1R21																									
	ON 0255	0400	13		11	W1R21	KY		15 OFF 1405	1420	38		15	W1R21																									
80		0442	14		2	W1R21	NLI		ON 1450	1454	39		6	W1R21																									
		0444	15		25	W1R21	VA		OFF 1455	1523	40		13	W1R21																									
		0446	16		12	W1R21	E.10		ON 1535	1542	41		9	W1R21																									
		0503	17		24	W1R21	E.102		OFF 1600	1558	42		21	W1R21																									
		0518	18		10	W1R21	OUT		ON 1615	1618	43		6	W1R21																									
	OFF 0545	0542	19		22	W1R21	OUT		OFF 1630	1630	44		1	W1R21																									
40	ON 0700	0702	20		1	W1R21	IL		ON 1633	1634	45		5	W1R21																									
		0725	21		4	W1R21	IL			1634	46		21	W1R21																									
	OFF 0740	0733	22		12	W1R21	S.10			1655	47		8	W1R21																									
	ON 0815	0819	23		62	W1R21	WIS		OFF 1705	1703	48		7	W1R21																									
80	OFF 0830	0830	24		38	W1R21	VA		ON 1715	1715	49		27	W1R21																									
	ON 0835	0840	25		21	W1R21	NLI		OFF 1715	1720	50		7	W1R21																									

CD-49 (R1067) - over - Printed in U.S.A.

HUDSON DIVISION			
Eastern New York			
WN2JAM	28,480	435-64-40	
WN2KDC	10,400	193-50-21	
WN2MDY	4662	101-37-20	
WN2KFL	4350	130-30-17	
WN2MGT	4347	161-27-32	
WN2ITO	3240	120-27-09	
WN2JGC	2870	070-41-13	
WN2HIC	2590	074-35-13	
WN2KBR	2156	077-28-16	
WN2JVR	969	051-19-12	
New York City - Long Island			
WN2MAN	38,940	570-66-35	
WN2LQZ	21,830	345-59-36	
WN2MSF	10,850	217-50-29	
WN2GQG	10,074	219-46-20	
WN2ITQ	4716	111-36-15	
WN2KBB	3808	099-34-10	
WN2HTB	3672	093-34-28	
WN2KJO	3364	116-29-18	
WN2LOM	3275	131-25-29	
WN2MQI	2842	088-29-16	
WN2LJV	1200	040-24-05	
WN2JRJ	592	037-16-	
WN2GRV	561	033-17-06	
WN2JFU	315	021-15-04	
Northern New Jersey			
WN2HID	33,835	490-67-40	
WN2LOV	19,760	370-52-36	
WN2KHO	17,174	262-62-25	

WN0VIF	30,095	453-65-40	WI
WN0YMK	20,178	342-59-35	WI
WN0YBS	16,800	300-56-36	WI
WN0ADS	16,308	302-54-21	WI
WN0YRE	13,664	244-56-29	WI
WN0YJL	13,050	220-58-40	
WN0AJU	2940	098-30-40	
WN0VZK	656	082-08-18	WI
Missouri			
WN0YST	21,472	352-61-31	WI
WN0AEW	20,740	340-61-40	WI
WN0ZNV	16,472	274-58-30	WI
WN0YMS	7285	140-47-14	
WN0YMC	7238	154-47-07	
WN0YBW	5863	143-41-35	
WN0YFA	5848	136-43-22	WI
WN0WBK	5120	128-40-31	WI
WN0YBB	2725	109-25-13	WI
WN0VSH	2523	087-29-25	WI
WN0YKI	840	042-20-09	WI
Nebraska			
WN0WOT	30,756	451-66-40	WI
WN0UFA	7150	143-50-30	WI
WN0WXX	5568	116-48-21	WI
NEW ENGLAND DIVISION			
Connecticut			
WN1LKS	22,208	347-64-	WI
WN1MAO	19,530	300-63-33	
WN1LJD	18,900	300-63-40	
WN1LWR	13,200	230-55-17	WI
WN1LSH	9849	181-49-24	

mini-CTU
CONTEST
UNIVERSITY





Where Do I Begin? ...I'm Glad You Asked!

- Know the rules (all of them!)
- Develop a plan that best exploits your station, availability, and goals
- Practice, practice, practice
- Effective operating style(s)
- Know your competition
- Have fun!



Know the Rules

- Rules change all the time
 - Missed scoring opportunities
 - “I didn’t know I could self-spot!!”
- Ignoring rules can be fatal
 - Score reductions, DQ
- Not all contests are created equal



Develop a Plan

- Set goals
 - QSO totals, best personal score, 1:1 competition, stretch goals
- Review previous log entries/competitors
 - On-line contest recordings (e.g., <https://k5zd.com/audio-archive/>)
 - Public logs
- Look for mistakes/poor operating decisions
- Be radioactive!!



Practice, Practice, Practice

Northeast
HamXposition

Typical well-conditioned
contest op such as K1AR



mini-CTU
**CONTEST
UNIVERSITY**





Even More Practice...

- Play in lots of contests
 - QSO parties, regional contests, CWTs, etc.
- Contest skills are not developed overnight
 - Getting 50+ years under your belt is a good start!
- Conversational CW
- Know your logging program inside & out



Operating Better Than That Other Guy!

Northeast
HamXposition

- Some basics:
 - Say/send the least amount needed to make a QSO
 - Don't be afraid to operate high in band
 - Timing in pileups matters
 - Old adage: operate on highest open band
 - Play to your strengths (and weaknesses)
 - If you feel loud in your mind, you're loud...exploit this!!



Operating Better Than That Other Guy!

Northeast
HamXposition

- Some more basics:
 - Use your ears first (then your tools)
 - Run when you can; S&P is not bad operating
 - ✓ 100+ QSO rates are quite achievable in S&P
 - Check odd bands/propagation
 - Track multipliers; avoid missing “easy ones”
 - Know/search for odd openings
 - ✓ 10M morning Asia LP, middle night high bands, early 40M EU, listening where others are not



Operating Better Than That Other Guy!

Northeast
HamXposition

- Let's talk SSB...



mini-CTU
CONTEST
UNIVERSITY

DX[®]
ENGINEERING



Operating Better Than That Other Guy!

Northeast
HamXposition

- SSB tips:
 - Use normal phonetics
 - ✓ W3 Linoleum, Pneumonia, Linoleum
 - Zero beat guys you're calling, not just the spotted frequency (if assisted)
 - Situational awareness matters
 - ✓ Callers working someone else, adjacent stations, band conditions
 - Please copy this:
 - ✓ NEVER, EVER, say "Please copy!"
 - ✓ Don't repeat the other guy's exchange

mini-CTU
CONTEST
UNIVERSITY





Operating Better Than That Other Guy!

Northeast
HamXposition

- CW tips:
 - Use appropriate CW speeds
 - ✓ Speed reflecting propagation, station you're calling, etc.
 - Call stations off-center frequency/where others are working them
 - The "one second" pause
 - Stations can be successfully passed on CW



Knowing Your Competition

Northeast
HamXposition

- Review previous results
- Discuss strategies with others
- Let the “head games” begin
- Who else is competing in your category?

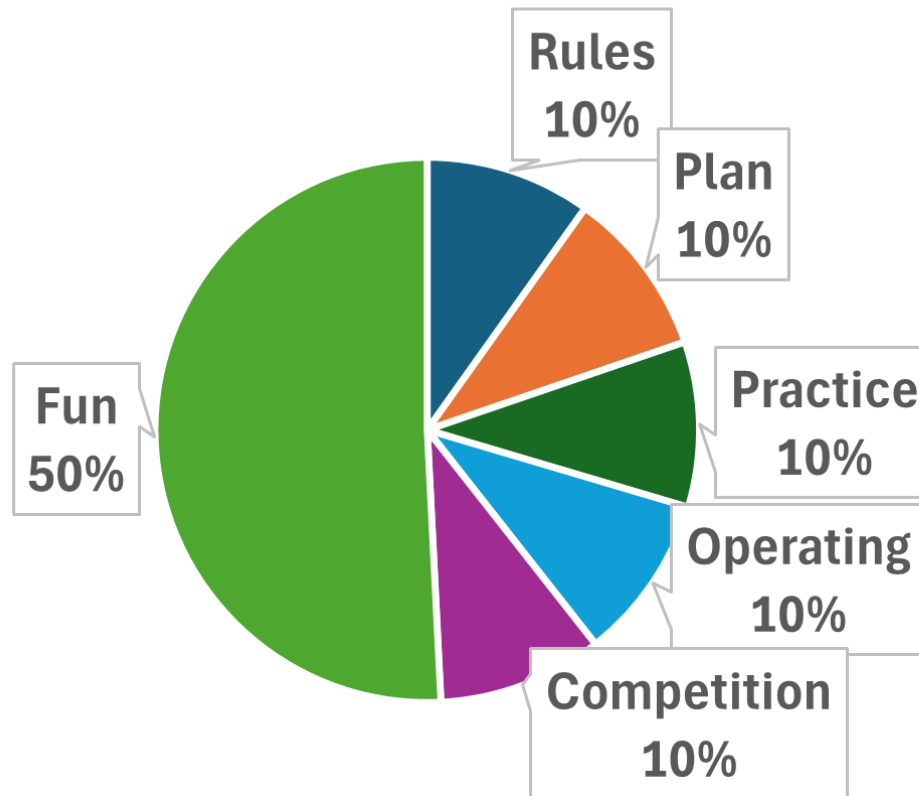


mini-CTU
CONTEST
UNIVERSITY





Contest Operating Wheel





?

?

?

Questions?

?

?