

# Field Day Preparation – Session 4

Contesting and Sprints

# Contests

Field Day is a Contest, as well as a preparedness exercise

- Goal of a contest is to make contact with as many stations as you can in a given time frame
- Field Day runs from 2:00EDT Saturday to 2:00 EDT Sunday
- A Contest is usually a day or more
- A Sprint is usually one or two hours

# Contests

For CW practice, look into the Straight Key Century Club

- <http://skccgroup.com>
- There is a a two-hour sprint once each month
- Fourth Wednesday, 0000Z-0200Z
- Weekend Sprint-a-thon 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday 0000Z-2359Z

# Contests

A contest has a fixed exchange that stations send to each other to verify a contact

e.g. Field Day exchange is station class and section

- VE3CJ 3A ON

# Contests

Two modes of operation for a contest:

- Search and Pounce
- Running a Frequency

# Contests

## Search and Pounce

- You roam the bands looking for a station calling CQ
- Call him
- He calls back with exchange
- You give your exchange
- He says thank you and asks for more calls

# Contests

## Running a Frequency

- You call CQ TEST or CQ FD
- Folks call you
- You pick out one call, give your exchange to him
- He gives his exchange
- You say thank you and asks for more calls

# Logging Software

A key part of the contest is keeping an accurate log. But logging software does much more

- Check for duplicates
- Copy the Frequencies
- Save log entries
- Send CW with macros
- Demo...

# Why are we Making this Contact

Contact style will vary depending on whether we're doing rag-chew, DX, or contesting

- Rag-Chew contacts can go on for a while
- DX and Contest QSOs are intended to be short
- In all cases, a QSO has a beginning, a middle and an end...

# Responding to CQ

Station calling CQ will send something like:

- CQ CQ CQ DE VE3CJ VE3CJ K
- 'Prosign' K means “Any station go ahead”
- Above transmission reads as “Any Station from VE3CJ, please go ahead”

# Responding to CQ

Zero-beat the station and send back:

- VE3CJ VE3CJ DE VA3TSK VA3TSK AR
- 'AR' is the prosign for 'End of Transmission' when not currently in a contact.
- If conditions are good, you might just send your callsign and AR.
- This is really a request to begin a conversation

# Responding to CQ

If the CQ'ing station hears you and wants to respond they will start a conversation

- VA3TSK DE VE3CJ GE ES TNX FER CALL BT UR RST 599 599 BT QTH OAKVILLE, ON? OAKVILLE, ON BT NAME FRED FRED SO HW? VA3TSK DE VE3CJ K
- Note that they have sent the essential information for the contact: signal report, location, and name.
- Other notes: Prosigns and abbreviations: GE, TNX, FER, BT, ?, 'SO HW?'

# Responding to CQ

You note down the information, along with time and frequency, then send back

- VE3CJ DE VA3TSK GE FRED NICE MEET U BT UR 599 599 IN BURLINGTON, ON? BURLINGTON, ON BT NAME GREG GREG BT RU GOING TO BE AT FIELD DAY? LOOKS LIKE FUN THIS YEAR BK
- We've now sent back the essential QSL information, so if the band fades or whatever, we can still log the contact.
- Since we're in a conversation, we don't need to sign the message with call signs, just BK is fine.

# Responding to CQ

Fred might reply with

- BK RRR C LOOKING FWD TO FD BUT SORRY TO NOT BE IN A REAL FIELD THIS YR HI HI BK
- BK is short for 'turnaround' or 'Back to You'.
- RRR (really just one R but people seem to like sending multiples) means 'received and understood'.
- C for 'yes'. 'HI HI' for laughter. Note other abbreviations.

# Responding to CQ

After some idle chat, you might want to politely move to end the contact...

- VE3CJ DE VA3TSK OK FRED MUST PICK UP YF FROM MALL BT TNX NICE QSO ES HOPE CUA 73 73  
VE3CJ DE VA3TSK

After which, Fred says

- OK GREG, TNX QSO ES CUA 73 73 SK VA3TSK DE  
VE3CJ (pause) dit dit

And you might send back dit dit, then log the ending time and carry on.

# Sending CQ

Similar to responding, except you're initiating...

- CQ CQ CQ DE VA3TSK VA3TSK K
- Listen ten or fifteen seconds for a call, then repeat til bored.
- If it's easy, you might want to turn off your narrow filter while listening. That way if someone isn't exactly on frequency, you'll still hear them and can get them with RIT