

Contest Soapbox

2005 IARU HF World Championships

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VY2ZM -- Dec 23, 2005 00:10 ET



K5ZD ready for the contest from VY2ZM.
Single Op, CW only, high power.

A most interesting contest. Too bad it started 24-36 hours too late to capture the best conditions. As it was, great start and then someone turned out the lights about 06z. Did get a final run into Eu on 20m during the last 90 minutes. Just one of the advantages of being so far to the East.

The VY2ZM station is amazing. Incredible radio location right on the water.

Very nice place to spend some time relaxing and watching sunsets as well. K1ZM is a wonderful host who welcomed my son Andrew and I into his home for the weekend.
-- *K5ZD*

CT3EN -- Nov 9, 2005 05:49 ET



CT3EN op CT1BOH

The IARU sits too of my list of favorite contests. It was great fun going back to Madeira and claiming a new SOAB CW World record. -- *CT1BOH*

3DA0KDJ -- Aug 16, 2005 12:06 ET

Landed at Johnnasburg about 11am after being on the airplane 18 hours. 5 Hours later we were in Mabane, Swaziland. K5LBU-Frosty, ZS6JR-Dan & W5KDJ-Wayne. While they set up the second trailer with the 18/24MHZ, 6M, & 2M beams I set up my ops position and got everything hooked up. Of course it took me about two hours to get the bugs out of everything and the contest has already started so I lost about 75 possible QSO's. I worked



Contest Station setup.



Antenna farm-65' Vert not shown.



W5KDJ operating in IARU



L-K5LBU/Frosty & ZS6JR/Dan.

EC8AUA -- Aug 10, 2005 14:25 ET

about 530 QSO's with 300W on HF CW. I worked 3757 QSO's during the entire 10 days there. The day we got there a solar flare hit and really made ops bad. The contest was really fun just wish we had started on time. LoTW - eQSL.cc. -- *W5KDJ*



Hello Mates !!

I'm very happy for my first time in the IARU HF World Championship 2005. I'm novice operator in HAM band but I pass a very fun weekend in the IARU Contest to working 1028 stations in only 50 KHz in 15 meters band.

Thanks you very much for very good contest and I hope to work all yours in the next year 2006

See you Later.....

73 de EC8AUA - Edu -- *EC8AUA*

ZK1IR -- Aug 4, 2005 23:53 ET



I went out to the South Cook Islands for the contest and had a great time with 80watts and my G5RV. I had over 1300 contacts and about 150 for the contest as condition were very hard at times and the bands were more active between 80,40,20mtrs but I just about gave up on 40mtr as it was my best band to the southAmerican Priates on our bands.

Regards Tommy VK2IR

PS I WILL BE BACK NEXT YEAR BIGGER AND BETTER FROM YJ FOR THE CONTEST
-- *VK2IR*

KD6AKC/KH6 -- Jul 25, 2005 22:08 ET



My first IARU HF Championship, and first 'expedition'. I picked up a TS-50 at Dayton with the intent to use it on the family vacation to Maui. What a great rig! I carried it on the airplane (along with the switching power supply from Dayton, and a borrowed tuner). I set up in a comfortable chair with simple wire dipole and had a great time Saturday evening making contacts (getting up early saturday morning was a waste...8 contacts in 5 hours!, though it did convince me to move the antenna more to the east).

The operating position.

20m was the only band I operated - it worked great for DX, the antenna isn't too cumbersome, and there were plenty of people operating. On top of that I could go on the hike with the family and still be back in time to catch the increase in activity at sunset.

Best contacts were a tough to copy but persistent Italian and a mobile in Michigan - neither of us could believe the armchair copy over such a long path with simple rigs. -- *KD6AKC*

KU4UV -- Jul 21, 2005 13:45 ET

This was my first attempt at operating in the IARU Contest. I used my brother's Icom 706 running 100 Watts into several dipole antennas in the attic of my apartment. It is hard for me to compete in any contest with this kind of setup, but I figured I'd give it a shot. I used N3FJP's logging software for the contest. I don't know what the conditions were like for others in the contest, but it seemed like they were fairly rough here in Kentucky. The fact that I don't have the best antenna system in the world probably is a factor too. I managed about 75 contacts, but hopefully I learned a little about the contest and maybe next year will be even better. Most of my contacts were on 15 and 20 meters due to my antenna restrictions and short height for the dipoles, but I did make a few on 40 as well. I tried to get on 80 meters using a Hamstick with a mag-mount on a piece of sheet metal on the patio of my apartment, but I couldn't get it to load up properly for operation. I didn't hear a whole of contesters on 40 or 80, but again, maybe just my setup. I never heard a peep on 10 meters. I worked K300 on 40 meters late on Saturday evening, a callsign I recognized. Thanks to all who worked me and tried to copy my weak signal. I keep planning on operating from one of my family's farms for one of the contests some day. I would love to try a Hamstick mounted to the top of the tool shed or barn with it's all metal roof to see what kind of signal it would produce! 73, to all!

73, KU4UV -- *KU4UV*

NU1AW/3 -- Jul 20, 2005 01:37 ET



Penn State Equipment Ready For Setup



**Alex, LZ4AX at NU1AW/3 20M CW
Position @ K3CR**

W9ZRX IARU Odyssey

My IARU odyssey began in March with a phone call from Tim, K3LR asking me to help operate 80M and put together an Internet Link between NU1AW/3's 15 & 20M CW Stations at Penn State University, and the balance of the operation at the K3LR "campus." I'd set up such a link two years ago for his W1AW/3 operation using Dave, K1TTT's WinTelnetX software, so it would be easy to duplicate. The only problem was that my xyl and I were going to be in Maggie Valley, North Carolina at the time of the IARU Contest! Leaving my xyl, Diane stranded 2000 feet up the mountain without a car for 5 days was obviously not an option! So airline, hotel, and rental car reservations were made way back in March.

Experience has shown the only way to reduce the rate at which my hair turns gray (and continues to leave with the comb) is to supply all of the computer equipment. The computers bound for Penn State had to be tested before we left for North Carolina in June. To insure they arrived in one piece, I did not want to entrust them to the tender mercies of UPS or FedEx. So Tim and I worked out a plan to ferry the computer equipment to the Dayton Hamvention and then, with the help of Joe, W3JTV, move it on to Tim's QTH in western Pennsylvania for pre-positioning. That meant the PC's had to be tested in late April and packed in early May. Fortunately with the help of Scott, N3RA firing up K3LR's 20M RUN PC, and



WA3FET In The K3CR Shack "Before" Setting Up



The Master Repairs (Another) TIC-Ring Control Box



NN1N & K8GL At The NU1AW/3 40M Position During A "Relaxed" Moment



N9RV & W9RE At The NU1AW/3 20M SSB Position - N9RV "Levitates" A Call From The Ether

access to the Penn State Dialup Server, a complete Network Check was run in early May so all of the Penn State equipment could be boxed with a high degree of confidence.

On 6 July my xyl drove me to the Asheville Regional Airport for a flight to Charlotte, NC, and on to Pittsburgh, PA. I rented a car and drove to Tim's QTH in West Middlesex, PA to pick up the pre-positioned PC's and turn on the Router and 20 RUN PC. From there I drove on to State College, PA.

Of course the very first thing I did after settling in the motel in State College was to seek out the staples of life – Diet Pepsi and Double-Stuff Oreos. I also needed a cheap cooler to ice down the Diet Pepsi's, so my first stop for all these essentials of life was the nearby Wally-World. While walking the aisles I got a call on my cell phone from Frank, W3LPL. He had taken a second lightning strike in a couple of weeks and this one took out another Cable Modem and the Ethernet Port on his Cluster's Motherboard. The backup Cluster PC I'd built was on-line and working, but some of the software needed to be setup and updated after I returned to the motel. Then while I was eating dinner, John, AD8J called with another lightning-related problem to the Cable Modem and Router that links the AD8J Cluster. Fortunately the motel room had High-Speed Wireless Internet. I was able to get AD8J going pretty quickly. The W3LPL issue was easy as well, but we went ahead and updated the PC and ended up taking to 11:30PM. I was glad this happened there rather than in North Carolina where we all we had was Dialup!

The next morning I met Dr. Jim Breakall, WA3FET for breakfast and we then drove to the Penn State Club, K3CR operating site in the country. Later Alex, LZ4AX who was the NU1AW/3 20M CW Operator, joined us. You can see the pile of equipment and cables (except the monitor!) that was unboxed and ready for installation – and the ever-present Diet Pepsi.

Jim and Alex cleaned off the operating table and made room for the extra rig and the extra computers. All of the connections went quite smoothly and we were essentially ready to go before noon. Jim had a crew of students climbing to relocate some wire antennas, so we left and to get submarine sandwiches for everyone. When we returned, Scott, N3RA went to K3LR's where we performed a full-up test to verify that we could pass SPOTS and GAB between the two sites.



K3UA Mans The NU1AW/3 15M SSB Position



N3GJ Wrings Out QSO's From A Reluctant 10M



K3LR At The NU1AW/3 80M Position



W9ZRX At The NU1AW/3 80M Position

Because of electrical storms in the area, the equipment was disconnected once tested. Once the link was reestablished an hour before the start of the Contest, it never dropped once.

I wanted to make sure I got a picture of Alex at the 20M position. Unfortunately W2RQ, NU1AW/3's 15M CW Operator didn't come down until Saturday so I don't have a picture of Bill.

After taking all of the photos, I was ready for the drive back to West Middlesex. Everyone agreed it would be quicker to route me to I-80 on back country roads, but no one thought I could remember the complicated directions! I said "let Delorme, my laptop, and GPS route me" and sure enough it picked their backcountry route. The only trouble was that Delorme doesn't seem to give VERBAL directions if the Route starts with a Start Point designated by the START TOOL – only when the Start Point is a specific Address. So I had to watch the laptop display closely for all of the turns to different back roads! And after all of that, when I got back on the US Highway that I knew led to I-80, and was speeding along congratulating myself on the computer navigation, I got to a town that decided to pave its streets at RUSH HOUR. Traffic was backed up for MILES. I could probably had driven via Philadelphia just as quickly!

Tim and I had planned on setting up the station starting early on Thursday evening. About the time I was going to call Tim to say I'd be late, Tim called to say the Dallas Airport had temporarily suspended operations due to lightning! So in the long run we arrived at about the same time. Scott, N3RA had already connected all of the PC's so we had a leg up. I began loading the PC's with latest versions of CT.EXE, CTY.DAT and MASTER.DTA. After I finished with a PC, Tim hooked up the IC-781 and verified the PC / 781 Interface was operational. This went pretty easily – I think only one CT-17 needed repair.

What caused Tim the most grief, which seems par for the course before every Contest, were the TIC-Ring Rotators. Just a "little" electrical damage ... 3-747 Op-Amps, a bunch of Tantalum Caps, a couple of Pots, and heaven only knows how much tower work to get the gears properly meshed so the indicators would work smoothly. Surely these are creations of the Devil!

But by a miracle, come Friday evening, everything was "ready to rumble." Dave – NN1N, Greg – K8GL, Mike – W9RE, and Pat – N9RV arrived and we went for a



A Final Team Picture (N3RA Not Present)

on the back of the head! The Contest went remarkably smooth. There were no fires, no one died – heck not even one good high voltage arc! 24 hours later, Tim got donuts for everyone so we could end the Contest with a good “sugar fix.”

After a quick group picture, everyone cleaned up and was on their way. I drove down to Pittsburgh and caught a flight to Charlotte, and then back to Asheville where I actually arrived a few minutes early. Diane and I had joked when this trip was planned that “nothing can go wrong can go wrong can go wrong.” But it was kind of important that I get back that afternoon – because it was our 40th Wedding Anniversary! Only a special kind of woman would have pulled ropes, occasionally climbed, and put up with this sort of thing for 40 years. -- W9ZRX

ZF2AH -- Jul 19, 2005 20:38 ET



Life is a kayak

K8AJS -- Jul 17, 2005 23:02 ET



K8AJS at the high-band station.

traditional feast at one of Tim’s favorite hangouts - the “Quaker Steak and Lube.” This “Lube” features a variety of Wing “seasonings” – some of which have been known to result in extended “lubrication” on an undesirable kind – as our 40M team of NN1N and K8GL learned!

The next morning Phil, K3UA and George, N3GJ joined us with N3RA making an appearance about noon. Not being used to being awake at 8:00AM, and looking through bleary eyes, yours truly tried to “jump start” the Contest. Fortunately Tim was close at hand to whack me

Great contest & fun as usual. There's more to life then contesting however - I enjoy fly fishing and kayaking from my Cayman home.

Joe, w6vnr -- W6VNR

This edition of the IARU HF World Championship was an opportunity to exercise the new K8AJS QTH. I missed this event last year because we were moving, but the off-time was worth it, as my new property is still not huge, but it IS twice as large as the small lot where I previously lived.

This contest marked another opportunity to not only participate in the IARU HF event, but to compete in the contest-within-a-contest created by N0AX for the "off-years" of the WRTC competitions, the "WRTC-Style" team competition. This year, N8IW and I were the team named "League of Extraordinary Gentlemen" and we put together an operation for the team event. Equipment



N8IW at the high-band station.



K8AJS diggin' 'em out on the low bands.

experience running networked computers in a multi-transmitter setup, and made enough contacts to feel that our effort was worthwhile.

Next year will come soon, and I'll have another opportunity to give this contest the big effort.

-- K8AJS

included an FT1000MP and an FT1000MP Mark V, antennas were a 3-element quad for 20-15-10 and a home-built Carolina Windom for 160-80-40.

We had planned to run a couple of amplifiers to compete in the Multi-Single High Power category, but Tuesday before the contest was when my Ameritron ALS-600 amp inexplicably decided to quit delivering power, so we changed plans and operated low power. There's a category for that in Ward's team competition, so we could be competitive there, but low power isn't an option for Multi-Single in the overall contest. It would be harder to make a mark there. In addition, the team competition limits antennas, to level the playing field for that event.

Propagation for the contest was disappointing, to say the least. I was hoping for great things, as conditions for a couple of weeks up to the contest had been very good, with frequent morning openings in to Asia, and European opportunities through much of the day. Unfortunately, contest weekend would have nothing like that, as we dug and scratched through the QSB and noise for the contacts we got. No JA openings this year, we can only look to the future. Nevertheless, we had a good time, got some great

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Page author: n1nd@arrl.org

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