

Using RufzXP

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I like to use two freeware programs for my Level 2 and 3 students. One, Morse Runner, simulates the WPX-type contest where you must copy and enter callsigns and serial numbers. The creator, VE3NEA, also adds all kinds of artifacts to the audio, such as QRM, QRN, LIDS, QSB and so on. It gives you a taste of a real contest environment. The other, RufzXP, is a great training program for copying callsigns. It starts you at a selected speed and keeps incrementally increasing the speed, if you copy each callsign correctly, but reduces the speed incrementally as you begin making errors. In other words, it consistently pushes your envelope to your “breaking” point.

To download RufzXP, go to <http://www.rufzxp.net/> and download it. Matthias and Alessandro have created a very nice training tool. The web page also gives a nice explanation of RufzXP and an easy to follow “how to use it” guideline.

Essentially, once you’ve got the program downloaded, you enter your callsign and a starting speed and then just start copying and entering callsigns, one after another. After a certain amount of time has elapsed, it will stop and display how you did. I recommend downloading it, setting it up, playing with it, and discovering how to make it work for you.

Used in combination with Morse Runner, RufzXP provides an excellent warmup just before starting a serious contest effort. But, equally important, it provides great training opportunities for those who are trying to increase their CW skills, especially with a view toward contesting.