



CWops Events

On-Air Monthly CWT

Next one: 10 February 2010

Start time:

0300Z NA region

1100Z Asia/VK/ZL region

1900Z Europe Region

1-hour each region

Exchange name/number (members)

Exchange name/SPC (non-members)

CWops Birthday Party

To celebrate the beginning of this new CW club, we will hold a 9-day event. There is no set exchange, but members are encouraged to share membership numbers as they meet and greet each other.

The Birthday Party event will run from 0000z Saturday, March 6, 2010 through 2359z Sunday, March 14, 2010. Report the total number of contacts made.

CWops "neighborhood"

Look for CWops in increments of 8 KHz from the band edge – e.g. 1.808, 1.818, etc. On the WARC bands its 10.118, 18.078, 24.908.

CWops Officers and Director

Officers

President: Pete Chamalian, [W1RM](#)

Vice President: Art Suberbielle, [KZ5D](#)

Secretary: Jim Talens, [N3JT](#)

Treasurer: Harry Wilson, [W1AAX](#)

Directors:

Bert Donn, [G3XSN](#)

Shin Onisawa, [JA1NUT](#)

Vidi La Grange, [ZS1EL](#)

Webmaster: John Miller, [K6MM](#)

Publisher: Rob Brownstein, [K6RB](#)



Birth Announcement

The CW Operators' Club

Conceived: November 2009

Born: December 2009

150 Charter Members joined by January 2010

**600+ Charter Members joined by January 30 2010
and still growing...**

From the president...

I want to welcome each one of you to CWops! What started as a germ of an idea late last year has blossomed into a new club with more than 500 members from 49 countries and all continents in just a few months! It's exciting stuff for sure. But it's only the beginning.

All of this has come about thanks to the very hard work and dedication of a core team of guys who had a vision, supported it, and made it happen.

This core team includes: N1DG, W1AAX, W1EBI, W1RM, K2VCO, N3AM, N3JT, K5MA, KZ5D, K6MM, K6RB, and N6XI. We are supported by our interim Board, G3XSN, JA1NUT, and ZS1EL.

In the space of just two months, the team has put together the by-laws, articles of incorporation, the web site, logo, the first on the air event, the reflector (and all the work that goes into registering people for it), and the list goes on and on.

But this is only the start. Our Vice President and Activities guru, KZ5D is working on a bunch of ideas which he will be rolling out in due course.

One of our stated objectives is Education and Outreach. More talk about that and member involvement, suggestions, and the like will follow.

Pete, W1RM



Recent get-together of some great CW operators: (standing L-R) Bernie, K1SA; Fergus, YV1NX; Dave, W2QM (sitting L-R) KA3J and Jim, N3JT.

From the VP/Activities Chairman...

This first month of existence for the CWops Club has been an overwhelming success. At the time I wrote this, Charter membership has exceeded 530, with still several days left for stations to join.

One of the goals for the club is to sponsor on-air activities throughout the year. The first event was the Mini-CWT held on Wednesday, Jan. 12th. Without any more publicity than on our Website and a couple of reminders on the reflector, we had a very significant turnout.

At 1100z, 21 stations reported scores; at 1900z we received 34 reports, and at 0300z Thursday (Wednesday night US/Canada) we had 42 reports.

Many of you may wonder how did this event come about? I was asked to serve as interim Vice-President and head up the Activities Team. We debated a number of ideas, and finally settled on a one-hour long event held once a month on the second Wednesday of each month.

As we tried to decide on a time that would work world-wide (since we are an international organization), an out-of-the-box suggestion was to hold three successive events that would favor times for operators around the world.

So we settled in on 1100 - 1200z (favoring Asia/Pacific); 1900 - 2000z (favoring Europe/Africa); and 0300 - 0400z – Thursday (Wednesday evening in US/Canada).

It's interesting to note that many of those who took part in the various events were not

in the target areas, but were available to operate at those times. This turned out to be an added bonus. And, surprisingly, many stations took part in two or three of the events.

After the inaugural running of the Mini-CWT, it became clear that the original exchange we required was somewhat cumbersome. So the Activities Team has come up with a much shorter exchange that we will use beginning with the next Mini-CWT on February 10th.

The new exchange for members will be **Name and Membership Number**. For non-members, the exchange will be **Name and State, Province, or Country Prefix (S/P/C)**.

Questions arose as to whether this is a contest between members, or an activity. And, there is no one correct answer. You can make of it what you wish.

Compare your score to other members because we will list all who care to report their results on our web site. Or, don't bother sending anything in. Operate casually, engaging stations in mini-QSOs, if you like. Or, operate contest style and see how many contacts you can make in the 60-minute period. It's your choice.

We are developing another method to report scores that will be in place before the February Mini-CWT, so keep your eye on our Website and the reflector for details.

I am delighted to report that Nick, NA3M, has coded the N1MM logging program for our event. You can download the latest version of N1MM and choose CWOPS for the contest.

Nick has made the change on the exchange so the latest version will handle the February

event correctly. We've also had some other help developing an edited general logging module for WriteLog. Hopefully other software providers will jump on the bandwagon and add the CWOPS event.

If there's a Mini-CWT, will there be a Maxi-CWT? It's in the planning stages now for a 24-hour event twice a year. Details will follow.

Meanwhile, get on the bands and all CQ around the "8s," our suggested gathering frequencies. Meet fellow club members and non-members. If you QSO a good CW op, suggest he consider joining us. The more members, the better. Your suggestions are welcome.

Art, KZ5D

From the Editor...



Each month the latest version of this newsletter will be posted on the Website for you to read. It will always have some information from the current president and vice-president/activities chairman.

It will also provide details about upcoming events, such as the February 10 mini-CWT. We will also try to include non-club CW events that should be fun for our members.

There will be a section on member news, each month, with details about new equipment, DXpeditions, Contest-peditions, and any other news.

I'd like to publish articles about CW- and ham-related topics, and I'd love to have photos of you, your stations, and the like.

Some of the articles can be “how to” types, such as how to adjust a bug for best sounding dits and proper weighting; or, how to adjust a paddle for best iambic operation. What’s your secret for picking out the weaker signals during a band-busting contest? You get the idea.

If you have a vintage tube-type rig with cathode or differential keying, how do you tweak it for best rise-and-fall to achieve minimal clicks? Essentially, anything you submit that would be of interest to CW operators is fair game.

Keep in mind that this is your newsletter. It will be as interesting as you all make it. The reflector can be a source for ideas, too. What about an article on QSK? Do you have an interesting key or bug collection? Write about it and provide us with some photos.

There are a lot of Elecraft K3 owners in this club. What are some tricks you’ve learned for settings that improve selectivity?

The newsletter will also provide a list of that month’s current nominees. Listen for these people, sponsor them if you feel they’re qualified, and let’s grow this unique new club.

Finally, if you have anything to submit, please try to get it to me by mid-month. Email your files to k6rb@baymoon.com, and please put “newsletter” in the subject field so I can spot them more easily. There will also be a “letters to the editor” section where you can praise me or beat me up for something I included or failed to include.

Rob, K6RB

EDITORIAL

Sailing and Morse – Two Peas in a Pod

“Morse is like a horse-and-buggy, no one needs it anymore,” said a ham I ran into at Pacificon one year. I thought about it for a few seconds and answered, “You’re wrong; it’s like sailing, no one needs it, but some people really love doing it.” That was the first time I had compared sailing to radio telegraphy, but the more I thought about it, the more sense it made.



People have been sailing for thousands of years now. At one time, it was the only means of transporting goods between continents. People did not sail for fun; they sailed because they had to.



Then, in the 19th century something happened. The steam engine was fitted to a sea-going vessel, and for the first time, long-distance travel by sea could be done without relying on the wind.

By the early 20th century, all major shipping was being done using powered vessels. Many felt that sailing would simply become extinct. It was no longer being taught in naval academies, and seemed to be becoming a lost art.

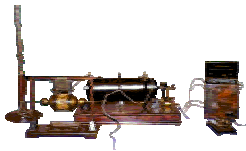


Ironically, in the beginning of the 21st century, there are actually more vessels under sail than at any time in our history. Major shipping, of course, is still done using powered vessels, but a lot of people in a lot of countries find the skill and enjoyment of wind-powered boating something to aspire to learning and doing.



Morse-based telegraphy over wires began in the mid-19th century, and wireless telegraphy

began in earnest about half a century later. During World War I the first attempts were made to use wireless as a means of military communications, but its value had already been publicized to the world a decade earlier with the sinking of the Titanic.



Ham operators began by communicating with one another using spark transmitters and crystal receivers. As

electronics emerged with the Fleming valve and De Forest triode, more stable transmitters and receivers took the place of the old spark and crystal gear. But, the signals were still being encoded and decoded using Morse. As radio became regulated, and operation required licensing, aspiring ham radio operators had to pass Morse competency tests and written tests that combined questions about regulations and minimum-essential technical knowledge.

Even as amplitude modulation telephony emerged, and many hams tried their hands at voice communications, Morse continued to be the primary mode of operation well after World War II. In those days, a DXCC award for phone was considered a much tougher accomplishment than one done using CW.

Today, of course, the tide has changed. Beginning in the late 1950s, SSB transceiver technology made it possible to create CW-and-SSB rigs that sold for less than the separate transmitters and receivers of the 1940s and 1950s. And, with the greater efficiency of sideband versus AM, a lot of existing ham operators migrated to phone, and many newer operators learned just

enough Morse to get their general-class tickets and then stuffed their hand keys in a drawer.

These days, new operators are no longer tested for CW competency. There is no novice class of slow CW operators working to meet the minimum requirements for general or higher-class tickets anymore. The commercial shipping industry no longer requires its radio operators to learn and use Morse. Like sailing, it looked like it was destined to become a dying art.

But, also like sailing, there are still a lot of people who find the skill and enjoyment of CW communications something of great personal value. No one who has never sailed before gets into a modest sailboat and does well. It is an acquired skill that must be taught and learned. The same is true for Morse. In the 1950s and 60s, the novice-class ticket was our entry into the world of radio and CW. Some of us saw it as a hurdle to be leapt over on one's path to a higher-class license; others found it exciting and enjoyable. I still hear stories, like my own, about young hams who couldn't wait to upgrade and go on phone only to discover that they really enjoyed CW much more.

There's a lot of talk about the graying of ham radio. Certainly the average age of a ham these days is higher than it was in 1960. And, far too many new operators go only so far as getting a technician license and a two-meter handheld and never discover the magic of HF. Of those who do try HF, most go right to sideband.

The novice license forced us to bootstrap our Morse skills and gave us a year to do it, in the beginning. For many of us, though, that was a great inducement to learn it. Today, if we want to grow a new crop of CW operators, we have to impress our non-

CW brethren with the personal value of becoming a competent CW operator.



Without the marinas and sailing courses, sailing would not now enjoy its global popularity. As members of CWops, it is our opportunity to provide the infrastructure that fosters learning CW. We have much better training tools than ever before. What's missing is the sheer number of CW QSO opportunities. If we get back on the air, between contests, and renew our passion for just communicating using CW, we become a magnet for those others who today tune through mostly empty CW sub-bands. And, if some of us with the patience plop ourselves up the band and operate at modest speeds, we will help those who want to improve their CW skills by just giving them confidence and offering advice.

Our love of CW can be contagious. If every one of us takes one person a year under our wing and helps him or her become a competent CW operator, we will double our number in one year, and quadruple our number in two. It's our challenge. Let's all rise to it.

Rob, K6RB