



CWops Events

On-Air Monthly CWT

Next: **11, 25** May 2011

Start time:

1300Z Asia/VK/ZL region

1900Z Europe Region

0300Z (12,26 May) NA region

1-hour each region

Exchange name/number (members)

Exchange name/SPC (non-members)

CWops “neighborhood”

Look for CWops on 1.818, 3.528, 7.028, 10.118, 14.028, 18.078, 21.028, 24.908, 28.028, 50.098

CWops “Happy Hour”

1900 local, every day, on or near the “neighborhood” frequencies – just call “CQ” or answer someone else.

CWops Officers and Director

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From the president...



A Lot is Happening

May marks a significant milestone for CWops. We have two major initiatives to announce – the CW Academy and the CW

Open! I am pleased and proud of the teams that have worked so hard to put these two programs together. It’s a true labor of love and a desire to give something back to ham radio that inspires us all.

CW Academy

I’ve been talking about the Elmer program for a while now. With W5JQ, CW Academy Manager and K6RB, CW Academy Assistant Manager, among others, the program is now official: The CW Academy by CWops.

You will read the details elsewhere in this issue, but know the approach has something for every CW operator, from the non-ham who is interested in radio communications and wants to be challenged by learning to communicate through Morse Code to the veteran ham whose CW skills are moderate but wishes to improve proficiency and become more active on CW.

Our plans include both direct instruction as well as a high level of encouragement and recognition as reinforcement as participants grow their skills. There will also be a considerable level of ongoing publicity in

the ham radio press around the world, reflectors, material sent to newly licensed hams, and more. Please read the details of the plan and let W5JQ know if you are available to help. There will be opportunities for everyone to get involved.

A New CWops Sponsored Contest

Elsewhere in this issue, you will read the details of the CW Open, scheduled for August 20/21. The CW Open will be just that – open to all CW operators, members and non-members alike. It will be a contest with a twist which you will have to learn about by reading the rules – trust me, it will be a fun event.

News about this event has been posted on the reflector and it was announced at Visalia. By all accounts, there is lots of interest and excitement over this new event. Thanks to Alan, AD6E for picking up the ball, putting the finishing touches on the rules, and agreeing to be the contest coordinator.

Promotion for the event is in the works and we expect to make a splash at Dayton with contest details and promotional information. Help spread the word, the CWO promises to be as much fun as the CWT and then some!

Washington Dinner

The dinner is only a week away now. Bobbie and I are looking forward to going and hope to see many of you there. There's still time to make a reservation although the opportunity for a special room rate has passed. To sign up for the dinner go to <http://cwops.org/members/DCweekend.html>

Dayton Hamvention

This year CWops will again be represented at the Dayton Hamvention. Don, N1DG, Jim, N3JT, Rob, K6RB, and John, K6MM will be our roving ambassadors at the convention, and will also be manning the CWops table. If you're going to be there, stop by, and pick up a CW OPEN button.

CWT

Apparently there was a little confusion over the changes in the CWT. Please note the new time for the first session is now at 1300z, not 1100z. And, to double your pleasure, here is a second running of the event on the 4th Wednesday of each month. A full schedule of remaining CWT dates for 2011 has been published on the website: <http://cwops.org/scores.html>.

I'm hopeful that I will have all my antennas back in action in time for May.

See you on the bands!

Pete, WIRM

The CW Academy

Those of us who got our novice licenses in the 1950s and early 1960s remember fondly the novice sub-bands on 80, 40, and 15 meters. In the beginning, most of us were clueless about operating procedures. It wasn't unusual to hear a novice sending "CQ" 15 times in a row, a "de," then his call 15 more times, followed by a "k." Let's face it, we were truly wet behind the ears. But, it didn't take that long for most of us to get our CW sea legs. Why? Because there were a bunch of other newbies in the same boat and we were learning our CW skills together. It really helped when a "general" would drop by, call or answer a CQ, and teach by example what to do and what not to do. But, those days are long over, never to return. Or, maybe not.

There has been some ad hoc activity toward the upper portions of the HF bands where slower CW operators work one another and gain more experience. The problem is, it is ad hoc. We have heard from more than a few such operators that often they'll call CQ without a response for 10 minutes or more and just go QRT. And, that's a shame. What's been missing in all this is a structure – a program that spells out who, what, and when, plus achievable goals along the way. Back in the 1950s, the achievable goal was getting your code speed up to or above 13 wpm and passing your general. Today, there are no code requirements. What we have is a mode of operating that takes skill, is fun, and offers lots of return on the investment in time that goes along with learning the code and proper CW operating techniques.

A lot of people saw in the elimination of code from licensing exams the beginning of the end of CW. But, each year the number of CW logs submitted in most contests is actually growing. For the last few years, in fact, most state QSO parties have been largely CW parties because the lousy conditions made phone a non-starter. So, the good news is that CW is alive and well. But, the bad news is that a whole generation of hams came into the hobby thinking that ham radio was all about handy-talkies and repeaters. And, though some of these folks have moved on to HF operation, most have avoided CW because there simply was no support system.

And, that's where the CW Academy comes in. We have put together a plan for a structured approach to increasing the population of competent CW operators. Beginning with hams who do not even know the code, our program stretches all the way to hams who know the code, operate some CW, and want to get better at it. We will spell out the specifics in the next issue of Solid Copy, and on the Website, but essentially it is a program that involves advisors, trainees, a means for putting the two together, sub-bands designated for practicing and improving one's CW skills, and a certification scheme that rewards incremental achievements.

We know the trainees are out there. What is missing, for now, are the advisors. And, that's where we come in. Is there any one of us who could not commit to spending an hour or two on the air, per week, working CW trainees and teaching by example? Think of the satisfaction you'll have

knowing that you played a personal role in keeping CW alive, and helped another ham become comfortable with a mode that will make their ham-radio tenure more enjoyable.

The ultimate goal for CW Academy is to bring back that learning environment that was the novice bands of old. It will happen if people hear that other learners and experienced CW ops are congregating at predictable times, on predictable frequencies, every week, all year long. And, the beauty of this opportunity is that unlike the novice bands of old, that were populated almost exclusively by US hams, the CW Academy will be looking for volunteer advisors and operators in every ITU region. And, operating times will be such that an aspiring CW operator, anywhere, will be able to find others to contact and learn from.

Jay, W5JQ CW Academy manager

Rob, K6RB CW Academy assistant manager

The CW OPEN: What's the story?

By: Alan, AD6E; and Rob, K6RB

Almost from the time CWops was first launched, we had an on-air event (mini-CWT) that continues to grow in popularity. People like it because it's short, it's fun, and it's simple. Even seasoned contest pros, like Ken, N6RO, and John, K4BAI, are frequent players in the now bi-monthly events.

But, also from the beginning, we were mulling over the idea of an annual (or semi-annual?) event that was more like a CQ WW, that would be electronically scored and stringently judged, and would provide nice awards to the winners.

We also wanted whatever we conjured up to be truly different than anything else out there. It had to meet several criteria: it had to be global; it had to be distinctive in at least one aspect; and it had to be structured in such a way that it would appeal to casual testers, serious testers, and even those who don't often participate in contests.

In addition, we wanted it to be an "open" contest where points and multipliers were not tied to what country you were in or what band you were on; and we wanted the exchange to be simple enough so that even someone who bumps into the event on the same day could figure out what to send.

And, finally, we wanted to try to create as level a playing field as we could so that no matter where you were – ITU region 1, 2 or 3 – you would have as good a chance as anyone else if you wanted to take a serious shot at the brass ring.

Presenting the CW OPEN

Ideas flew back and forth and began to coalesce around a concept – the CW OPEN. To try and ensure that no region was at a distinct advantage or disadvantage, we had to schedule it over a 24-hour cycle. After all, the planet does a full rotation every 24 hours, so every region has a number of hours that are optimal for either high band or low band propagation. To make sure that a ham sitting on a rare exotic island off the coast of South America or Africa could not pile up scores that made a ham in Missouri feel like a loser, we decided to score 1 point per QSO – any QSO, anywhere – and 1 multiplier the first time you work a station – any station, anywhere.

Think about it. If W1RM works 100 different EU stations on 20 m, and K6RB works 100 different CA stations on 40 m, our scores would both be 10,000 points. Wow, what a concept! That means that stations with multiple towers, full-legal amps, and monster yagis will have an advantage – but nothing like the advantage they have in CQ WW or ARRL DX.

Okay, so we solved the inclusiveness part of the challenge. What about appealing to serious, casual, and almost-never contesters? We made the exchange very easy. It's "serial number" and "name." For those who are unfamiliar with the "serial number," it is simply a number starting with 1 that increments by 1 with each new QSO. So, with the first QSO, you send "1 JOE ." With the second, you send "2 JOE." And, so on.

Finally, contests are judged by the number of participants they attract. CQ WW CW literally dominates the CW bands for an entire weekend. But, for those who are not prepared to put in 30 hours or more, your score will certainly not be in contention. We wanted people who could only put in a few hours to feel like they had a real chance at winning something. So, instead of one contest that starts at say, 0000Z, and continues for a day or more, with scores that continue to grow throughout the time period, CW OPEN is actually three separate contests – each one 4 hours long. Each begins with 0 points and 0 multipliers. So, you could do just one 4 hour stint and stand a good chance of winning that event. You could do all three and have a chance at winning any or all of them. And, if you do participate in more than one, your scores are aggregated and you are in contention for the "aggregate" category as well as the individual event.

We wanted to keep things simple, so we decided to eschew multiple operator categories for now. Therefore, all entrants are single operator. And, because of the way the contest is scored, you could win a 4-hour event with a single-band effort, so stations that cannot work six bands have a real chance, here.

Ok, enough, here are the details:

CW OPEN's first event starts at 1200Z and ends at 1600Z on August 20. The second event starts at 2000Z and ends at 2400Z on August 20. And, the third event starts at 0400Z and ends at 0800Z on August 21.

At the beginning of each event, all participants start with 0 points and 0 multipliers. Your score at the end of that time period is your score for that event. You can participate in one, two or all three.

In each one, you work a station once on any band. So, you could work someone six times in each event – or 18 times if you both operate in all three. That means that over that 24 hour cycle, you should have plenty of stations to work.

For each QSO you receive 1 point. The first time you work that station, you receive 1 multiplier. The score at the end is points x multipliers. For example, if N3JT works ZS1EL 6 times (once on each band), his score for that effort is 6 points x 1 multiplier, or 6. If N3AM works K6RB, W1RM, K4BAI, KR3E, ZS1EL and JA1NUT all on 20 m, his score for that effort would be 6 points x 6 multipliers or 36. Clearly, there's more of an advantage in working lots of different stations than there is in working the same one on six different bands. However, by the end of the 4-hour period, you will be looking for lots of points, regardless of multipliers. And, because any QSO offers a point and a potential multiplier, no matter where he/she is, you could earn an enviable score running QRP and working lots of close-in stations.

What does the “cognoscenti” think?

Before we went too far down this road, we took a break, and shared the details with a few well-known testers, including one who has “invented” an innovative contest himself. The verdict was unanimous – everyone thought it was a winner.

We first introduced CW OPEN in April at the International DX Convention in Visalia California. Both of us (Alan and Rob) had a chance to describe the concept. Rob did so at his presentation during the Contest Academy; and Alan introduced the idea at the testers' dinner that same night. Sean Kutzko, KX9X, who heads up the contest section at QST was given the early details and gave it his thumbs up.

What can you do?

The biggest thing each one of you can do is to participate in at least one CW OPEN event, and, if possible, two or all three. The more stations that participate, the more fun it is for everyone, and the more successful the event will be. So, make a note of it, now. And, be prepared for a lot of excitement.

The other thing you can do is if you are a member of another radio club, let them know about CW OPEN. Point them to the URL – www.cwops.org/cwopen.html . Explain about the unique concept – three contests over a 24-hour period. Each one is separately scored and judged. Points and multipliers are not weighted toward geographies – you get the highest score by working a lot of people, no matter where they are.

If you are a member of a contest club – YCCC, PVRC, NCCC, SCCC, SMC, FCG – let them know about it. Write something on the reflector or submit a note for the newsletter. The more hams who know about CW OPEN, the more hams that will show up on August 20 and 21.

From the VP/Activities Chairman...

Art is taking a little break this month from his column. But, he did collect the ACA/CMA results for the April. Here they are...

Call	ACA	CMA
W4AU	349	712
N5RR*	338	1487
KZ5D	284	1421
W1UU*	225	632
EA8AY	221	571
W6KY*	212	811
W5ZR	205	1107
W1RM*	197	1109
N2UU*	196	766
K6RB	184	898
EA1WX*	174	570
DL8PG*	173	297
N1ZX	172	220
W4PM	150	1249
KR3E*	143	605
W6RKC*	118	521
W4BQF	106	340
K2VCO*	102	411
V31JP	100	137

N5TM	90	215
N3JT	77	650
VU2PTT*	66	207
N3AM	63	778
K4GM	52	462
W1UJ	52	
AD1C	51	377
K6DGW	43	333
W2LK	36	406
OK1RR	2	282
HB9CVQ		479

From the Editor...



I'm really excited. I'm just thrilled that CWops is moving ahead with both the CW Academy and the CW OPEN. For me, these two programs will be our crowning achievement for 2011. I'm looking forward to participating in both programs – as an advisor and as a participant in CW OPEN. I hope many of you will, too. The success of both programs will depend upon each of our commitments to do our part.

I'm also looking forward to going to Washington this weekend for the CW Enthusiasts' Weekend. I've been to two of these DC programs, before, and they are great. You have not lived until you've visited N3JT's house and eaten fresh bagels and cream cheese, drunk a lot of fresh-brewed coffee, and had eye-ball after eye-ball QSO with the great hams who all seem to gravitate there.

And, I'm going to Dayton for my first time, ever. This, I've been told, is the equivalent for a ham of going to Mecca. I'll tell you what I think when I get back. Look for my review in the June issue of Solid Copy.

A couple of weeks ago I had the honor of presenting, again, at the Contest Academy program at Visalia, sponsored by the Northern California Contest Club (NCCC). While there I met Sean Kutzko, KX9X, who heads up the contest section in QST. You can't really tell from Sean's

photo much about his size. He is tall...very, very tall. And, a great guy, and a member of CWops. I gave Sean an advanced copy of the proposed rules for CW OPEN, and he thought it was a very good concept. While there I also cornered Rusty, W6OAT, and Ken, N6RO (also members) who are both big contest enthusiasts. They, too, were very bullish about CW OPEN.

If you're going to Dayton, please be sure to stop by the CWops table and say "hello." Don't forget to wear your CWops buttons.

73,
Rob K6RB

Top Ten Reasons for Trying 6 Meter CW

By: Wes Spence, AC5K

10. We need to "burn in" our newly assigned CW Ops 6 meter meeting frequency of 50.098 MHz.
9. Your hand will not get tired from long QSOs, because the nature of 6 meters is such that conditions change VERY quickly, so everyone just exchanges quick reports while the band is open.
8. You will be utilizing a new band on that expensive radio that you convinced your spouse you just had to have.
7. You will finally have that excuse you have been waiting for to memorize your grid square.
6. 50 new states, 6 new continents, and tons of new grids and countries to chase. You can also be the DX by going out and activating a rare grid square.
5. Antennas do not have to be super high for successful contacts. I spent my first two seasons on the band with a small loop at 17 feet.
4. Antennas for 6 meters are smaller than those needed for HF, but you should be horizontally polarized for greatest success.
3. The main seasonal peak for Sporadic E propagation is in mid-summer just when the HF bands are in their seasonal decline. There is also a minor peak in mid-winter. Use "DX Sherlock" to spot openings; it takes cluster spots and plots them on a continually updating map to visually show where the Es clouds are, and who is being worked.

2. You will expand your vocabulary (the 4 letter words that is), and have an opportunity to finally drink up all that old liquor in your cabinet. This is because the 6 meter band can be VERY frustrating between openings, and there is no band that can be as dead as 6 is, sometimes.
 1. And the Number ONE reason for trying Six Meter CW is: (drum roll) Six meters is super fun! Conditions can turn from “tragic” to “magic” in just a few short minutes. Just when you are ready to rip down your antenna and burn your radio, the band will suddenly reward you with a great opening. You never know who or where you will work next. The flakiness of this band is actually what makes it addictively fun!
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CWops Member Stories

Bertram Donn, G3XSN, CWops 14

Firstly, it was my intention to make the Army my career, and at the age of seventeen, I was a pupil at The Liverpool Collegiate School. I was a corporal in the JTC (Junior Training Corps) and specialized in marksmanship. I qualified for War Certificates A & B.

I would also mention that my twin-brother, Gerry (G4IHS), was also in my class at college. I sat the Sandhurst Army Entrance Exam in Preston, Lancashire and waited for the results. In the meantime, Gerry was called up for the compulsory two years National Service whilst I had a deferment.

Five months later I was informed that I had passed the exam but my father who had been in the army during World War One convinced me to do National Service before deciding my career. I missed Gerry, so I applied for my call-up papers.

I was shipped over to Omagh, County Tyrone in Ireland for basic training and took the Personnel Selection Tests. I was the only one to be offered a commission by way of a WOSBE (War Office Selection Board) and OCTU (Officer Cadet Training Unit). I had a rather big argument with the Personnel Selection Officer as I told him that I wished to join my twin brother who was training to be a Wireless Operator in The Royal Corps of Signals.

Anyhow, I went to Catterick and qualified as a Radio Operator, Wireless and Line, at a speed of 18 wpm in Morse. We were both shipped over to Egypt in February 1948 and my first job was operating the Cairo Embassy Link from Moascar Garrison on the Canal Zone.

The guy at the Embassy was sending blocks of five figure code at around 25 wpm. When I asked him to confirm a couple of the blocks, he sent the Z code (ZBM2, I believe, if my memory serves

me correctly) to "Put on a competent Operator." This 'slur on my character' incensed me to the point that I said to myself, nobody will ever do that to me again!

At that time, the United Nations had a NET of superb CW Operators in most of the capitals of the Middle East countries. I spent hours listening to them and eventually I was copying 45 wpm with the aid of a typewriter.

I finished National Service in July 1949 and realized that the army was not for me. It was not until 1965 that I found out about Amateur Radio, and in 1968 I got a full license. Gus Taylor, G8VG, was the instructor for The RAE and we became good friends.

I very rarely use SSB and after a few months on the key I was invited by Bill, G8VG, to join FOC in 1968. I knew nothing about the club but stayed with FOC for 40 years before resigning. At The Royal Signals Annual Reunions, I entered the CW contests and won an inscribed pewter tankard each time. I think the top speed was 35 wpm which I had to write down.

I enjoy CW and these days. I am not a contest man although I have taken part in the past. Mostly I like to chase DX and my main rig is a Yaesu FT 1000 which I have had for approximately 14 years.

My HF antenna is a Hy-Gain TH3 Mark 4 up at 33 feet on an Altron telescopic mast. I also have a home-made W3DZZ which performs extremely well on 40 and 80 meters.

I must relate something I consider humorous. Whilst in Egypt, I was in charge of the Radio Link to our troops in a convoy pulling out of Palestine. I had to remind several officers about security procedures and one high-ranking officer picked up the carbon microphone, spoke into it and then shoved the microphone into his ear to hear the response. I could not stop myself laughing.

At the age of 82, I do not think I need any more radio equipment.

Brian Skutt, N3IQ, CWops 302



My father, W8PC (previously W8CJN/W2VIJ) was/is an active ham and CW contester, but surprisingly, he didn't teach me much about radio before my parents split. I had the good fortune to learn Morse as a Boy Scout (along with semaphore and other signaling techniques--yes, even smoke signals), and a neighbor kid and I took and passed the non-renewable novice test when I was 9 or 10 (but and I didn't make any contacts at all because I had no equipment).

Later, when I was a freshman in high school, there was an active club, and I retook and received the WN8IOJ callsign and used the club station a lot. They had a Drake 2NT and 2C receiver, wire antennas, and I seldom got caught skipping classes for being on the radio!

At home I finally acquired a Globe Scout, an SX-99, a 7152 KHz crystal and, later, a Heath Q-multiplier and a VF-1VFO, and was very active. I soon went to Detroit on the bus and took the Amateur Extra exam. The CW was easy--they made me go first and all the adults after--and my AMECO book had most of the information I needed to pass the General and Advanced theory easily. The Extra Class exam had some questions about transistors--not mentioned in the old AMECO book--but they were enough like triode tubes. Amazingly, being good at copying Morse helped get me a leg up for college entry--at an interview one of the reviewers recognized me from a speed competition at Dayton and got me entered into an honor society that turned out to be an important credential.

Later, I used the club station at the US Military Academy at West Point (W2KGY) when I was allowed--which was infrequently. I was thrilled to see that there were TV programs made a long time ago (I think they were called "West Point Stories"), and one of the shows had the station and cadet hams at W2KGY highlighted!

When I moved to Maryland in 1980, I set up a modest station at my home and didn't meet the PVRC bunch for quite a while. Later, I had the great enjoyment of being a guest at W3LPL (and K3DI, and a few others) over the years, and still had a rather modest station at home--but was able to share stations with quite a few DXers, contesters and VHF+ aficionados, which was/is a blast.

Finally, when I moved to my current QTH in 2003, we put in a more robust station and I now enjoy teaching radio techniques, single op contesting and small multi-ops. The station has Yaesu FT2000s, Quadra amps, low band wire arrays, and a 105' tower with stacked tribanders and other antlers. For the VHF contests, I generally rove. (ED – a rover is a station that moves around from grid square to grid square throughout the duration of the contest).

My wife and I have purchased a mountaintop site west of Winchester VA and are configuring now with radios and antennas. For the last seven years we have traveled for CQWWCW, usually to Nassau Bahamas, but now we may just spend Thanksgiving at the mountaintop retreat!

Glen Hinkley, NN6T, CWops 781



I first became interested in ham radio at age 13. It was June of 1970. My grandfather, Clarence, WA6LLR (Silent Key as of 2004), would pick me up on weekends at my parents' house in Norwalk California and he and I would go to the Center for the Blind, also in Norwalk, where he would teach a CW class to the blind.

I still remember how easy it seemed for them to learn the code. Soon, I became interested and learned the code myself. After receiving my Novice License and call, WN6BMT, my grandfather gave me an ARC -5 crystal-controlled transmitter and a National NC-88 Receiver. Then, he and I put a 33-foot tall vertical on the roof of my parents' house. The, I was up and running on 40 and 15 meters.

It was not long before Clarence was driving me to the F.C.C field office in Los Angeles where I passed my code test, and became WB6BMT. Then, he took me again to take my Extra Class, and I was given my current call, NN6T, which was not a vanity call, I had just checked "new call" on the upgrade application and got NN6T by luck.

In the mid 1980's I Remember working Shin JA1NUT, #15, often at 7.013 MHz. He and I became pals and would have many QSO's over the years.

Today I have a Yaesu FT-1000 MP Field and an Ameritron AL-80B, and I have owned lots of keys, bugs, and paddles. This past year my wife, Susan, bought me a Begali Simplex paddle .

As far as future changes to my shack, I plan on improving my satellite station, ICOM 910 H/ and KLM cross yagis, EME capability on CW and JT65 digital modes.

I love ham radio and CW, and have met so many great people. I am 53 years old, now, and it's as much fun today as it was 40 years ago when I made my first QSO.

Current Nominees

Need Sponsors	EA8ZS	Manuel De Aguilar
Need Sponsors	K3FX	Charlie Baker
Need Sponsors	K4HQB	John Fuller
Need Sponsors	KB1LZH	Pete Barbella
Need Sponsors	N1TX	Larry Ledlow
Need Sponsors	W1FCV	John Roache
Need Sponsors	W6OA	Don McDougall

For more details about nominees and status, check the “members only” on the Website:

www.cwops.org

For information about joining CWops, check the Website under “membership.”