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The International CWops Newsletter

November

2013

Issue No. 46



The Beautiful Begali Adventure on a KX3

CWops "CWT"

9, 23 October 2013

Start times: 13Z, 19Z, 03Z (10, 24 September)

1-hour each session

Exchange: name/number (members)
name/SPC (non-members)

CWA Days

2, 16 October 2013: 1300Z, 1900Z, 0300Z(+1)

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

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President: Rob Brownstein, [K6RB](#)

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President's Message

Wow, what an exciting October it has been. Our CW Academy September/October sessions are nearing

completion, CWTs continue to grow in popularity, and Dean NW2K is working diligently through the CW Open 2013 logs.

I am in Pretoria, South Africa, at this moment (9:30 AM on Friday October 25). I was part of the C82DX expedition which completed its operations on Wednesday morning and drove back from Xai Xai, Mozambique to Pretoria

on Thursday. Now, we're just wrapping up final details and making our way to Johannesburg for flights to our respective homes.

The C82DX expedition was my first such experience. I am still processing it. We did 9 nights and 8 days of operation on 160 through 10 meters. We had a Battle Creek vertical, a Titanex vertical located on the beach, two Big IR verticals and a hex beam. In one building a pair of IC-7600s and two amps were set up for SSB and RTTY operations; in the other building two IC-7600s and two amps were working CW exclusively. I spent virtually all my operating time in that second building, using a 7600 and FL-7000 amp while connected to the Battle Creek vertical.

The Battle Creek had a problem with the 40 meter trap so it was by-passed and the UN-UN was removed. Instead, we tuned it for 160 through 10 using an MFJ tuner. It worked surprisingly well on all bands, too.

We had anticipated that we would focus on the low bands, but the noise was horrendous. Despite many hours plugging away on 160 and 80, our best results were on the higher bands. Surprisingly, 10 and 12 were incredibly productive, even though our preliminary propagation charts said they would be marginal. The 15 and 17 meter bands were expected to be our "money" bands, but though they were productive, they were eclipsed by the runs we had on 12 meters.

The final tally showed we had made:

- 26,467 total QSOs
- 16,866 CW QSOs
- 9,360 SSB QSOs
- 1,941 RTTY QSOs
- 11 percent were with Asian operators, 50 percent with hams in Europe, and 33 percent with North Americans.

The team was just great. From the time of our arrival until we broke camp, everyone helped to make the overall effort as good as it could be. I was impressed by how well the whole thing was planned and managed. There were five members of the SECC group, and three from NCCC, but CWops had the greatest number – seven – W6OAT, K6RB, NF4A, K6TD, JN1THL, WF4W and N1DG. No wonder there were nearly double the number of CW QSOs compared with SSB ☺.

CWops

While in Xai Xai I had a chance to chat with Ray (N9JA) from ICOM. He is interested in having ICOM sponsor some aspect of CW Academy. So, I'll get back with him to discuss it. Tad WF4W, expressed interest in becoming a CW Academy advisor. So, I'll take him up on that offer, of course. Chris, ZS6RI, is interested in becoming a member, and has shown his capability at 25+ wpm in the CW operation at C82DX. So, the DXpedition may prove to be productive in some other ways.

CW Academy

Nearly all the advisors have completed their programs for the September/October semester. I interrupted my CW Academy course at session 10 and will immediately resume to finish sessions 11-16. Our next semester is January/February 2014...and we are fully, fully booked.

I'll see you on the bands.

73,

Rob K6RB

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From the Editor – Still System Integrating



In the September issue I extolled the virtues of operating a remote station. I'm pleased to report more progress on that front at N6XI. I have now set up client/server applications controlling the Alpha 87a and Elecraft KPA500 amps, the M2 Orion rotator, Writelog and the Elecraft KAT500 automatic antenna tuner. The rotor integration blew my mind – I type a call into the Entry field of Writelog running in Saratoga and tap F12, which I've programmed to mean "Turn the antenna to the location of the call," and the rotor in Truckee does just that. It has been my preferred means of rotor pointing when operating locally in Truckee for years. Getting it to work across the Internet – with only a few minutes of RTFM, no pain or strain – was truly inspiring. Alas, a few days later it stopped working and I muttered The Programmer's Lament, "But I didn't change anything!" Oh, well, more to do on that front.

I have remote access to most of my antennas now but still have some switching to build. I know what I want and have most of the parts. Internet access is poor at my location. Fortunately, the remote power switch now pings a high availability outside server at Google, automatically rebooting the DSL modem/router when it realizes that Internet connectivity has gone away. Alas, this happens a lot, probably some side effect of mixing RF fields with high communications loads on an end-of-line DSL connection. So my project continues but it's definitely progressing.

Remote ham radio today is where serial communications was in the 1990s – very capable but you have to know the territory or learn it in order to succeed. I look forward to the day, not too far off, when software will figure out what you have and adapt without a lot of explicit configuration magic.

If you haven't yet tried remote ham radio, consider it. Remote your own station, access a better one maintained by a friend or try an expensive, commercial one offered by Remote Ham Radio (.com). And check out the article by W0YR in the latest issue of NCJ on the low cost setup for remote control of multi-multi contest station K4VV. It's a whole new world!

WRTC Donation and Dedication

Now, when you're not operating CW remotely, perhaps you can go to a remote location to operate CW? In July, 100+ testers will have that opportunity in New England at the 2014 World Radiosport Team Championship. CWops will be well represented and CW will be arguably the more important mode. As reported earlier, we decided to make a donation to this very expensive cause by sponsoring a Team Village tent and we recently received acknowledgement from WRTC 2014 President Doug Grant K1DG who is also a CWops Life Member. CWops is "putting its money where its mouth is," or perhaps the English metaphor would be more accurately rendered on our behalf as "putting its finances where its fingers are?"

Although the privilege of representing one's country in the WRTC seems to be routine for a few contesting superstars, for the rest of contesting's wannabe's it is a once in a lifetime thrill. I had that chance in 2010 and it was the highlight of my ham radio career. I have made several donations to 2014 and I urge all of you to do so as well. See <http://www.wrtc2014.org/sponsors/how-to-contribute/>.

I considered heading to New England as a spectator next July but now I am thinking it will honor the competitors more appropriately if I just get on the air during the IARU Radiosport "containing contest" and work as many of the WRTC teams as I can. You can, too. Be there, there or on the air!

North American Weekend – Save the Date!

The North American CW Weekend will be held in McLean, Virginia (Washington, D.C. suburbs) on 2-4 May 2014, at the Fairview Park Marriott. This has become a wonderful gathering of CW aficionados, and we look forward to having many of you join us. I've been to this one several times and always enjoy the good company and good food.

Administration

Annual dues are payable starting October 1. Some of us belong to CWops to channel our volunteer energies. Some of us belong for the camaraderie of association with like-minded hams. Some of us belong to add ourselves to the list of CW advocates. And some of us belong because we want to support the education and training efforts of the club. But all of us can appreciate that none of this comes for free. Annual dues are modest and if annual solicitation is odious, you can sign up for five years at a time or even become a member for life. Check out the [on-line roster](#) to see how many of your fellow members have chosen to "put their money where their paddle is" and become life members!

Keep an eye out for an important notice in your email Inbox. A By Laws amendment is in process to create a new club management position called Ambassador. These will be members appointed by

the President to promote club affairs in their country or region. Sounds like a great way to expedite our growth and activities at the grass roots level.

73,

Rick N6XI

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Kenwood TS-590S – A very capable and affordable CW Radio

by Jerry Weisskohl AC4BT, CWops # 1148

I operate CW only and my main station (Elecraft K3, KPA500 Amp, and KAT500 Automatic Tuner) provides me with a very nice, feature-rich, CW operating station. In addition, the Elecraft support/Help is second to none and should be the standard for all tech companies. The overall customer service experience is at a very high level. My Elecraft setup allows me to work most stations that I can hear and has many noise reduction and filtering features to deal with most situations on the bands. Of course this comes at a very high price as this equipment is not cheap when factoring in all the K3 add-ons (roofing filters, second receive radio) and other components (amp, tuner, panadapter) that make up the “Elecraft K-Line”.

I needed to assemble a second station and was looking for a more cost effective solution than a second K3. After much research, I settled on the Kenwood TS-590S. The proverbial expression “Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery” comes to mind when first turning on the TS-590 and comparing it to the K3. Obviously, Kenwood engineers were really impressed by the audio receive capabilities of the K3 and strove to create a similar experience in the TS-590. It is hard to detect any differences in the receive audio between the two radios. Faint signals that I can hear on the K3 are also audible on the TS-590.

I can see two different approaches to designing these radios. There is a large learning curve navigating, setting up and implementing the many K3 features and settings. The K3 has a full set of filtering features allowing very fine tuning adjustments using the multi-function keys and menu controls. Macros can also be written and executed to automate many of the available features like placing the radio in Split mode with spacing customization between the two VFO's.

The Kenwood TS-590 has a more user-friendly design. I was able to figure out most of the radio's functionality in a few minutes without having to open the manual. The TS-590 has a nice balance between simplicity and complexity. The Power, Mic Gain, and VOX settings are easily accessed with single keystrokes without requiring the use of the menu system. I have noticed that the CW Full QSK implementation is slightly better on the K3 but not enough to make a big difference in overall performance. However, I am more comfortable on the K3 working Split, sending my call repeatedly and not worrying about missing anything when the DX station comes back. The Full QSK seems to be better (faster) implemented on the K3.

My main interest is chasing DX and in my experience you don't want to take a lot of time in adjusting the settings to make the signal stronger/cleaner. You are better served by pouncing on the

DX station at the first opportunity. With that regard, I usually set the K3 and rarely make any fine tune/filtering adjustments. With the TS-590, the Filter control is more easily accessible, being on one knob, allowing you to adjust the Shift and Width of the signal. Working split is more intuitive to me on the TS-590 and the TS-590's CW Tone button, allowing you to tune to the strongest CW signal in the passband, is better implemented than the comparable 'Spot' feature on the K3. (I don't have to make as many fine adjustments.)

I have the Kenwood TS-590 connected to the KPA500 Amp using a simple interface. About 25 watts input gives me 400 – 500 Watts out. The built in automatic tuner on the TS-590 works very well but when I have the Amp connected I use a 2K Palstar outboard tuner since the built in tuner is only rated for 100 watts. USB and PC interfaces on the TS-590 are built in and all you need is a USB cable connected to your computer to run any of the logging programs and/or to run digital modes like PSK31.

Overall, I really like operating the TS-590. I use it about 50% of the time. While it may not have all the capabilities of the K3, the price/performance ratio is probably one of the best. It interfaces well with my computer and software (I have tried both Mac and PC.) as well as with the Elecraft KPA500 amp.

If you are in the market for a new radio, either as your main radio or, as in my case, for use as a second station, I recommend that you check out the TS-590. It comes fully feature loaded as standard. There is no need to add any extra roofing filters. It's a very capable CW rig at a very attractive price.

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My Story – Bob Good K4BG

Greetings, I am Bob K4BG, formerly K4VHC, found most often on the US National Traffic System (NTS). I was licensed in May, 1958 as a Novice and upgraded in December 1958. When I became interested in "short wave radio," I ordered an "Ocean Hopper" receiver and built the kit. I was 12 years old then. I did not know any "Hams" at that time.

Being a Boy Scout, I did have a *Boy Scout's Handbook* which listed the characters for Morse Code. Accidentally, I found that if I grounded one side of the headphone output, the Ocean Hopper would oscillate. Now I had a code practice oscillator! Okay, so now I needed a key. Out came the old Erector set and a bit of what I later learned was "home brewing." I added a couple of angle pieces, an arm, couple of Fahnstock clips and a Checkers game piece for the knob mounted on a small board. The learning began. Soon, I found an old military J-38 type key. I taught myself to send the code before I ever learned to receive. Shucks, I was sending a good 10 wpm by then. I did learn through receiving that a "C" was not sent as NN. I upgraded to an E.F. Johnson "bug" when licensed on the Novice bands. 1959 brought a beautiful chrome Vibroplex Deluxe Original, which will be placed in my casket one day. Well on through Extra Class and now I was introduced to Iambic Mode B. I thought I would never catch on to full iambic. But eventually it clicked and I have never looked back. Nowadays, as I greet 70 years of age, I am embarrassed that I can no longer send at my maximum receiving speed. However, it keeps the "old man" honest. Today for

me, CW is an art form that I treasure and it's just pure plain fun. I do miss my 866's and P-P TZ-40's though....

73, Bob K4BG

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CW Academy – Growing!

Rob K6RB and Will WJ9B

Most of the CW Academy groups will have finished their courses by now, signifying the end of the September/October semester. The signup for our next semester – January/February 2014 – is full. So, too, is our signup for April/May 2014. But, we are still entering signups into April/May 2014 because we have found that as a new semester begins, some people, because of schedule changes, have to drop out. During September/October, we replaced the early losses with signups from the January/February list. This allows us to keep the number of students at a fully subscribed level. We will have the information about CW Academy graduates in next month's issue.

We are still seeing a disproportionate number of Level 1 signups compared with Levels 2 and 3. This is indicative of the demand for learning Morse and not just improving already learned Morse skills. In our January/February semester, we are seeing a big increase, though, in Level 2 signups. This is a good sign, too. These are people who know Morse but have trouble copying at 20 wpm or higher.

We have a new advisor to announce – Tad Williamson WF4W – who is also one of our newer members. Tad was with Rob in Mozambique (C82DX), and Rob put the moves on him ☺. Actually, he was quite pleased to join in the CW Academy effort.

We are always hoping to get more advisors because our Academy courses are not demand limited – they are advisor limited. We try to give each advisor no more than 5 students per semester. If we have 70 signups, though, do the math! It would be great to reach a point where we have 20 advisors that can be deployed during a semester, and 10 in reserve. That would allow us to serve the needs of 300 students, per year, while requiring that advisors only have two (rather than three) semesters to work with each year.

If you are considering becoming an advisor, now is the time to signup. We have nearly two months before the next semester begins, and we can bring you up to speed well before that. CW Academy is our signature service and one of the things that really sets this club apart. So, think about joining the CWA team.

73,

Rob and Will

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CWT – Weekly Exercise for CW Ops & Stations

By Hank Garretson W6SX



We had six really good CWops Tests in October. Participation keeps growing with new faces every session. You know how much fun CWTs are. Your job is to go out and recruit some of your friends to join us. Tell them that they can contest if they want or they can just get on and casually work other CW fans. Tell them we will slow down for them. Tell them we

will pull them out of the noise if they are signal challenged. Tell them we are a CW fraternity, and that we hope they will join us. [Dean NW2K contends that his score increased mightily once he found the CWT button on his TS-590! See above. – Ed.]

Hat Tricks: W6SX left the ACOM off and turned down the K3 to achieve the first CWops Test QRP Hat Trick on 9/10 October. N4AF bagged another High-Power Hat Trick on 23/24 October. We still have CWops hats to award to the second and third hams to achieve a High-Power CWT Hat Trick. And, we have hats for the second and third hams to achieve a QRP CWT Hat Trick. N5AW, WJ9B (pictured below), and NW2K are already proudly wearing their Low-Power hats.



Yes, Virginia, there will be CWTs on 25 December – our Christmas gift to the CW world.

CW Exuberantly,

Hank W6SX

CWT Manager

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From the VP – ACA/CMA Scores



<u>Call</u>	<u>ACA</u>	<u>CMA</u>
KZ5D*	511	2903
AA3B*	542	3662
F6HKA*	480	1874
VE3KI*	467	2189
W1RM	424	2639
K6RB	367	2014
DL8PG*	360	1219
SM6CNN*	417	2392
N5RR	317	2576
NN6T*	323	1055
PA4N*	303	955
EA8OM/DJ1OJ	264	1722
W9ILY	222	1358
W1UU	219	1250
WX7SJ*	224	375
N2UU*	242	1681
AD1C*	242	1009
K6DGW	172	1018
N1ZX*	139	616
PA7RA*	154	916
EA1WX	114	1206
W5ASP	51	418
W4VQ		1202
OK1RR*	183	893
W0VX*	309	1300

W6KY* 237 1412

* = updated data

73, *Art*, KZ5D

The Annual Competition Award (ACA) is based on the number of members worked each calendar year. You get one point per member worked, once per year. It resets to zero at the beginning of each year. The Cumulative Member Award (CMA) is based on how many members you've worked since January 3, 2010 on each band and continues to grow in perpetuity. The Cwops Award Manager (CAM) software, available at no cost, will help you keep track of your ACA and CMA totals.

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Secretary's Report

By Jim N3JT

With great pleasure we welcome the following new members to CWOps:

1227	NN4K	Mac
1228	N4UP*	Peter
1229	N5JR	Joel
1230	WB8JUI	Rick
1231	W1XT	Bob
1232	N3DXX	Art
1233	G0IBN	Andrew
1234	VY1JA*	Jay

* = Life Member

Dues

October 1 marks the beginning of dues renewal for CWops members for 2014. Please help us by paying early this year, long before the holiday season is upon us.

There are 3 options for membership.

- \$12 for a year.
- \$50 for five years.
- \$100 for lifetime.

An increasing number of members are going the lifetime route to avoid missing future membership submissions. In fact, you can see how many have done so by going to this site (using telegrapher for login and morse8 for password access) and

noting those listed in green: <http://www.cwops.org/duespaid.html>

To pay your dues online, go to <http://www.cwops.org/members/paydues.html> (using telegrapher for login and morse8 for password access). You can pay via credit card or directly from your PayPal account. You can also send K9CT cash or a check drawn on a US bank. If by check, be sure to put your call sign on it! If you are paying for someone else please use that member's call sign on the online payment form.

Your club is doing good things for CW and ham radio. Being part of CWops means training new people in CW and supporting CW activity. It really means preserving CW. Please renew now!

Thank you.

Jim Talens, N3JT

Secretary, CWops

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Current Nominees

As of October 28:

Need Sponsors: WA4STO, N8FF

Invitations Extended: KK4XX, SM5ALJ, W5APS, DU2US

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.”

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QTX Report

Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

QTX is a program for members who enjoy casual CW QSOs. Any time you have a QSO that goes over 20 minutes, jot down the call sign of the other station, and before the fifth of the next month, go to the [CWOps website QTX page](#) in the Members Only section and put in your total.

This month there were a couple of notes about roundtable groups for conversational CW. Steve N6TT mentioned that they “have started a big round table group on 40m in the mornings here with a lot of old timers checking in”.

Glen NN6T also mentioned roundtables in his comments. “Had a few real long and interesting Rag chews with Alan AC2K and Shin JA1NUT and several with Myron W7LXN and round table with Bob W1XT to name just a few. I enjoy rag chewing. The numbers are fun to keep track of, but the real joy is

the great friendship that always comes with a long contact. I worked a guy Gary KF7WNS he was only running 300 mw of power. That was a real fun contact.”

Here's the QTX results for September 2013.

<u>Call</u>	<u>Sept</u>	<u>CY2013</u>
N6TT	81	493
WB6BEE	69	150
NN6T	43	325
N5IR	40	339
K4AHO	32	254
N1ZX	30	106
K5LY	25	210
K5KV	16	136
WA8IWK	14	57
KI4XH	14	39
JE1TRV	13	97
KE6OIO	9	79
W0VX	9	9
K6RB	8	74
K0DTJ	6	83
W6JMP	6	15
WA3NZR	3	142
K6HTN	2	27
K8QI	2	46
N5RR	2	43
W5JQ	1	19
K3GHH		1
AA5SR		150
N4SR	54	
VE7ALQ		53
N3IQ	26	
K6RQT		15
HB9CVQ	8	
W1UU	7	
G4CPA		6
DL8PG		4
W4VQ	2	
N1DG	2	
K2XX	1	

N6TT (81) has set an all-time CW Ops QTX record. Great job!!!

WB6BEE (69) has improved every month to an impressive total. What will next month bring?

2013 personal bests this month for N6TT (81), WB6BEE (69), N1ZX (30), WA8IWK (14), W6JMP (6).
Congratulations!

Total QSOs were up 21 from August. Reporting stations were the same as last month, 21.

Thanks to all for your participation.

73,

John K1ESE, CWops #792

QTX - All About Conversational CW

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