



K4RUM "Current Events" Solution

CWops "CWT"

Every Wednesday

Regular Tests: Full Speed

Start times: 13Z, 19Z, 03Z (+1)

1-hour each session

Exchange: name/number (members)

name/SPC (non-members)

(Avoid DX pileups!)

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's Message

What's in store for May? How about Dayton?



For the sixth year in a row, CWops will have a booth; and if past years are any pattern, we'll be right around the corner from the Begali booth and down the lane from ARRL's booth. We'll have

information to hand out, awards to display, and CWops people to talk to. So, if you're in Dayton, make sure to stop by.

May will also be the final month of the April-May CW Academy semester. The advisors are all working diligently to ensure that our student signups receive the full benefit of our counsel.

Judging by the students in my two groups, we continue to get really motivated students. It is all good for ham radio.

We will be doing CW Open a bit differently this year. In year's past, we had one manager who oversaw the whole global effort. And though we've seen reassuring turnouts and growth in participation, the three CW Open sessions have been dominated by North American players. That may always be the case, but this year we have three co-managers who will each focus on his own region. In Region 1, Alf, IT9MUO, will be stirring up activity, monitoring his region's results, and contributing a Region 1 section to the report that follows. In Region 2, Bruce, N1LN, will be playing a similar role. And, in Region 3, Dai, JF2IWL, will round out the troika. Coordinating the co-managers and keeping these cohesive, as well as collecting and adjudicating all the logs, we have Alan, AD6E – one of the founders of CW Open.

As with all such events, participation makes it more fun for everyone, so we hope all our members will take part in CW Open. If you are not a serious contender, just pick one of the four-hour sessions and give it a go. You may surprise yourself as to how much fun it can be. Remember, you are really competing only with others in your region. All overall winners and category winners will be selected for each region. So it is more of a level playing field than most other contests. Also, the scoring does not necessarily favor those with full-power stations and gain antennas. Try it; you'll like it. Mark your calendars and join the fun on **Saturday, September 3!**

If you go to our website (www.cwops.org) and look at the member roster, you'll see that more than half of us are "life" members of the club. That's impressive. It shows that you think the club is a good one and you want to stay connected for the long term. We strive to make CWops an inclusive club that welcomes hams with diverse operating preferences. Whether you spend your time primarily chasing DX or ragchewing or contesting, if your favorite mode is CW, we want you in CWops.

Last year, at Dayton, about 50 CWops members showed up at the booth on Friday morning for a group photo. The photographer had to stand on a chair, across the aisle and down the lane in order to fit us all in the frame. This year, at our Thursday night dinner in the Spaghetti Warehouse, organized by Bill, KC4D, we will have more than 60 people attending. That's the largest group we've had, by far, at that venue. In addition to the good food, we will be presenting our annual award for advancing the art of CW. Each year from now on we will be asking you to help us choose the ham or hams that should receive that award. We hope to see many of you that night at the dinner.

Coming up soon are some fun state QSO parties. We will have already enjoyed the Florida QSO Party and perhaps even the New England QSO Party and 7QP. Each year these latter two parties grow in participation because they are regional rather than state QSO parties. It may start a trend where we have a South East, Midwest, and South West event. Having more states and county multipliers certainly adds to the fun.

Finally, for those of us who have had antenna storm damage during the winter season, now is a great time to work on getting things back in solid working order. Don't wait until it's too hot out there. Do it now. But, most importantly, do it safely.

73,

Rob K6RB

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From the [Editor](#)



Dayton!

The first annual *CWops Award for Advancing the Art of CW* will be announced at the CWops gathering in Dayton on Thursday evening, May 19. Contact KC4D if you would like to attend. There is no charge other than for your dinner, but space is limited. There are already more than 60 people planning to be there...even me! Yes, for the first time in about 20 years, your Editor is planning a pilgrimage to Dayton. Although not the best hamfest in the US (IMHO that's the Visalia, CA IDXC), it is certainly the biggest and it's about time for yours truly to try it again. This will be only my second attempt to drink from the Hamvention fire hose. Wish me luck!

May 28-29 UTC is the CQ WW WPX CW contest. I used to deride these WPX events because of the silliness of using prefixes as multipliers. I mean, how is it more meritorious to work a K3 and a W3 than to work two N3s?! But the "everyone works everyone" format makes it a truly world-wide contest and the silly multipliers actually have a leveling effect on the always-skewed playing field of radiosport. You never run out of stations to work, scores grow exponentially with hours invested, rates can be pretty high, and you even have to copy something other than call signs – those serial numbers can be tricky when signals decline and noise levels rise. Be careful out there! This year I'll be operating a casual multi at my Filly Lane mountain QTH, with N6TU and any others we manage to recruit. We'll probably sign WF6C (the "Filly Contest Group") and may be an under-staffed multi-two so that two of us can have fun running at the same time, avoiding the frustration of being a multiplier op at a multi-single, unable to work anything that isn't a mult. The station suffers significant second-harmonic interference, though, so it may be a choice of which frustration we prefer to endure.

Mike, K4RUM, sends along a photo he calls "Current Events" which he says may explain why his CW tends to decline in quality as the night moves on. It's on Page 1.

Redmond Comes Through!

You may recall my recent rant about a new release of Word for MacOS that insisted on displaying formatting marks, even with the feature explicitly disabled, a truly annoying bug that essentially rendered Word unusable. Well, two months later came another release and the bug was, thankfully, repaired. I no longer have to move back and forth between MacOS and Windows while compiling *Solid Copy*. It still seems to be necessary to do a final pass with Word for Windows to make the hyperlinks work in an exported .pdf, but at least the process of copying submissions from various emails and Web pages into Word can now be accomplished within MacOS. Yeah, I know, it was probably a mistake to abandon Windows in the first place, even partially, but I'm not ready to admit defeat. Onward.

73,

Rick N6XI

Editor

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News & Notes

[Jerry Weisskohl AC4BT](#)

This is a column where members can report their activities, happenings and achievements, both radio-related and personal. Please send brief notes to Jerry AC4BT at jweisskohl@gmail.com.

Vic, 4X6GP/K2VCO: After being on the air here in 4X for about 1-1/2 years, I qualified for the basic DXCC Challenge award -- 1000 band-countries, all CW of course, and all via LOTW. My next goal is to get to 300 confirmed, which won't be trivial since so many aren't on LOTW. Unfortunately there is no certificate issued, only a plaque which costs US\$ 124, after I've already spent an equivalent sum submitting my LOTW credits! So I think I'll forgo the plaque and make my own certificate.

My latest antenna is an open-wire fed rotary dipole, 10m long, which I've managed to beat into working on 40-10 meters. I'm still thinking about improvements. No beams allowed!

Chris, G4BUE: At the moment, I am QRV with just my old refurbished Butternut on all bands as my tower, SteppIR three element Yagi and wire antennas are all on the ground!

I arrived home from Florida (N4CJ) on 30 March, two days after Storm Katie hit my area, to find the head unit of my tower had become completely detached from the top tower section and was hanging upside down alongside the tower with the rotator and Yagi also upside down. It was only the cables that prevented it falling to the ground. One of the SteppIR fiberglass elements had been torn off in the wind and all the EHUs have cracks in them.

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2016 North American CW Weekend

3-5 June 2016

Fairview Park Marriott

Falls Church, Virginia

The 2016 CW Weekend will take place June 3-5 at the Fairview Park Marriott in Falls Church, Virginia. This is open to all hams or others with an interest in CW or Morse code communication – FOC, CWOPS, SKCC, the Morse Operators Society, and FISTS. It is predominantly a social event and provides a great opportunity to connect with old friends, make new ones, and enjoy those eyeball QSOs with folks you have worked on the bands for years.

As in years past, we'll kick off with an informal pizza dinner on Friday evening, followed by a brunch on Saturday morning hosted by Jim N3JT and Nina KE4PSV at their home in McLean. Dinner will follow that evening at Clyde's in Tyson's Corners. There will be a hospitality suite with refreshments at the hotel on Friday and Saturday evenings. Sunday morning, many attendees meet informally at the hotel restaurant for breakfast before heading home or on to other activities. It is likely that Frank, W3LPL, will make a tour of his world class contest station available Sunday afternoon if there is interest.

Early June is a nice time of year to visit the Washington, D.C. area, and the schedule allows plenty of time for sightseeing, shopping, and socializing, or visiting with family and friends.

A block of rooms has been set aside at the Fairview Park Marriott at a special rate of \$99. You may reserve by calling the hotel at 800-228-9290. Be certain to mention that you are with the "North American CW Weekend party. Reservations may also be made online at marriott.com/wasfp. The special booking code for our group is "NACNACA." The special rate is available from June 3 through June 6.

There will be a modest registration fee of \$15 per person or \$25 per couple to cover refreshments and the hospitality suite, payable by check to Don W4ZYT, 1517 W. Little Neck Rd, Virginia Beach, VA 23452-4717. Further information is available from Don, W4ZYT (w4zyt.don@gmail.com) and will be posted on the FOC and CWOPS web sites.

We really do look forward to seeing lots of CW folks at this gathering. Talk it up, mark it down, and come!

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Contest Friendly

by Hank Garretson W6SX

The Amateur's Code by Paul M. Segal, Number Four: "The Amateur is Friendly."

What does "Friendly" mean in a contest?

My rule for contests is simply this: Completing the contact in shipshape fashion as quickly as possible is the most friendly thing I can do for the other guy and for the other guys waiting. And it's generally the most friendly thing you can do for me. The running station sets the tone, or flavor, of the exchange. If the CQing station, even if he's my best friend, sends me a standard-issue exchange without pleasantries, the friendliest thing I can do in return is send him a standard-issue exchange without pleasantries. If he says "HI HANK", then he's giving me the go-ahead to loosen up a (little) bit. It's a contest – be "contest friendly" during the event and "regular friendly" afterwards.

How about "TU"? "TU" can have multiple meanings in a contest. It says "Thank You" but when used at the end of a contact it also acknowledges or QSLs the completed contact. I encourage the use of "TU".

But "TU" at the wrong place can cause problems for both the "TU"er and the guy on the receiving end. Here's an example:

CQ CWT W6SX

W2RU

W2RU HANK 61

W6SX BUD 65 TU

TU W6SX*

Many of us, through decades of honing our contest messages and timing for greater efficiency, are primed and conditioned to send "TU W6SX" as soon as we get the exchange information from W2RU. Which means we double on top of Bud as he's finishing his "TU". Yep, it's our fault – we should hesitate a little bit before hitting F3. But, being creatures of habit, we often don't and we double with the other station. If we're running QSK, we immediately realize our goof and send another "TU W6SX". If we're not running QSK, we're often unaware that we've doubled with W2RU, who is left wondering, "Did I have a contact or not?"

If you want to send "TU", try something like this:

CQ CWT W6SX

W2RU

W2RU HANK 61

W6SX TU BUD 65

TU W6SX

We're still being friendly AND there will be fewer doubles and less confusion. End result: more contacts and fun for everyone.

CW Exuberantly,

Hank W6SX

* Bud would never send a dangling TU. He's a great contest operator. We've been friends for almost sixty years. Much of what I know about contesting I learned from Bud.

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Special Devices Model 100A Electronic Key

by Ed Goss, N3CW

The Model 100A appears to be a production device with some advanced features. However, very little is known about its heritage or the manufacturer who made it.

Introduction to the Model 100A

The keyer (or electronic key as the manufacturer calls it) shown below was recently found on an auction site; the seller obtained the device from an estate sale, and was unable to provide any history or supporting information about the device. Figure 1 presents the keyer in its as-bought condition.



Figure 1. Special Devices Model 100A Electronic Key, as obtained from auction site seller.

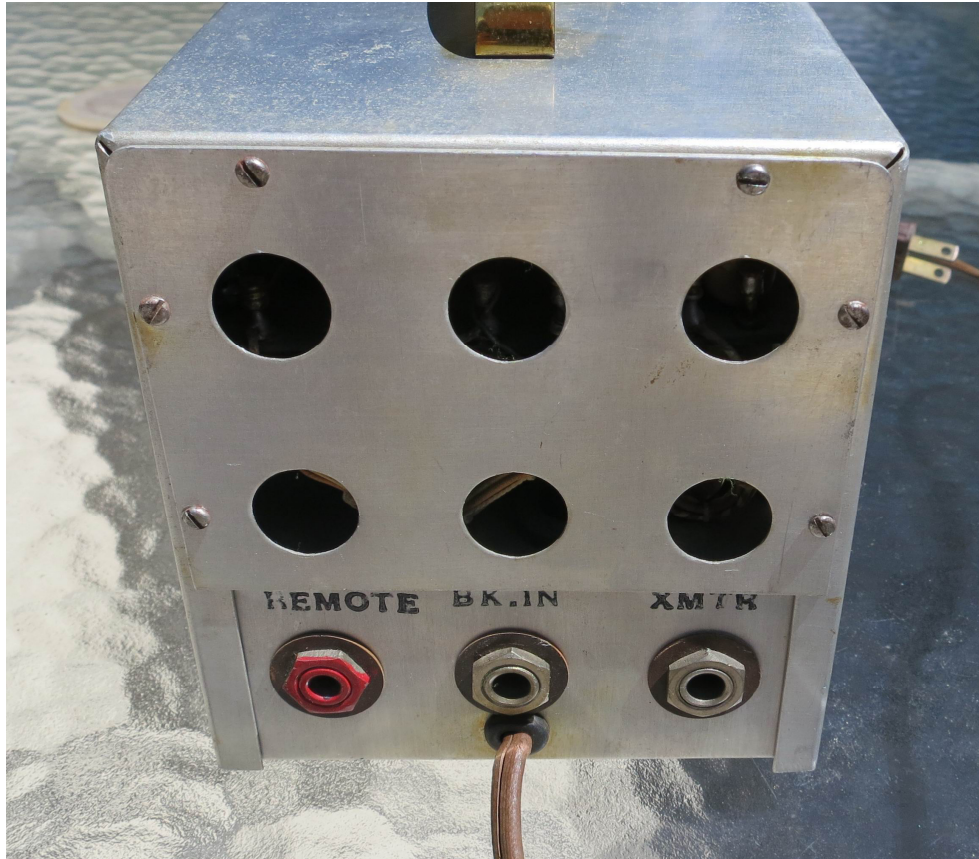


Figure 2. Model 100A rear panel.



Figure 3. Model 100A bottom plate is made of lead and stamped with the manufacturer and product ID information.

The Mystery of the Keyer's Origin

Several things were immediately intriguing about this keyer. The unit's serial number of 43, the compact size of the keyer, and the sophistication of the dual-lever paddle design offered evidence that the Model 100A was not just a quick homebrew project. The keyer has similarities to some early 1950s W6OWP compact designs, as well as the 1957 Eldico EE-3. Stampings on the keyer indicate that it was made by Special Devices Co., of 7 E Franklin Avenue in Barron, WI. A quick check on Google shows an older house at the 7 E. Franklin Avenue location. It is easy to envision this keyer being part of a small batch of devices made in a basement shop. A check of online callbooks for the years from 1958 through 1962 does not yield any hits for the E. Franklin Avenue address. Perhaps the maker of this keyer was not a ham, although that would be a bit surprising if true. To further add to the mystery, attempts to find any archived records for Special Devices using Wisconsin Historical Society records yielded no matches. Additional research into various ham and technical publications for the years 1958 through 1962 found no matches. Several e-mails were sent to Wisconsin area ham clubs, with a request to ask CW-oriented members if they recognized this keyer. None did.

Observations and Features of the Model 100A

The Model 100A is a tube-based keyer using a 6AL5 dual diode, a 6J6 dual triode, and an OB2 regulator. Output keying is via a relay. In addition to the compact (for the time) size of this keyer, the construction and feel of the dual-lever paddle assembly is notable. The fact that it is a dual-lever design, when other integrated keyer mechanisms of the time period were single-lever or converted bugs, makes the Model 100A stand out. Dual-lever paddles started gaining widespread acceptance with the Nikey paddle around 1960, and when early transistor ultimatic keyers became popular. The Model 100A mechanism features elongated aluminum finger pieces, which eliminate the need for separate paddle arms. For those familiar with the W9WBL paddles, there is a vague similarity to the Model 100A paddle as seen in the WBL's use of square brass bar stock and bakelite-type blocks for the paddle's frame. There are two embedded pivot bearings in each finger piece. The top and bottom adjustment screws are hollow at the ends to allow the operator to set bearing feel. Two pairs of contacts are used, with contact points provided on finger piece standoffs and on the ends of the contact adjustment screws. Locking nuts are included for all adjustments. Paddle return to center is via spring tension, which is also adjustable. Despite the age of this integrated paddle, it is velvety-smooth and consistent in operation. The low moving mass of the mechanism (remember, there are no arms!) is far ahead of its time. This is a paddle which operationally is an anachronism, and is as pleasant to use as many of today's paddles.

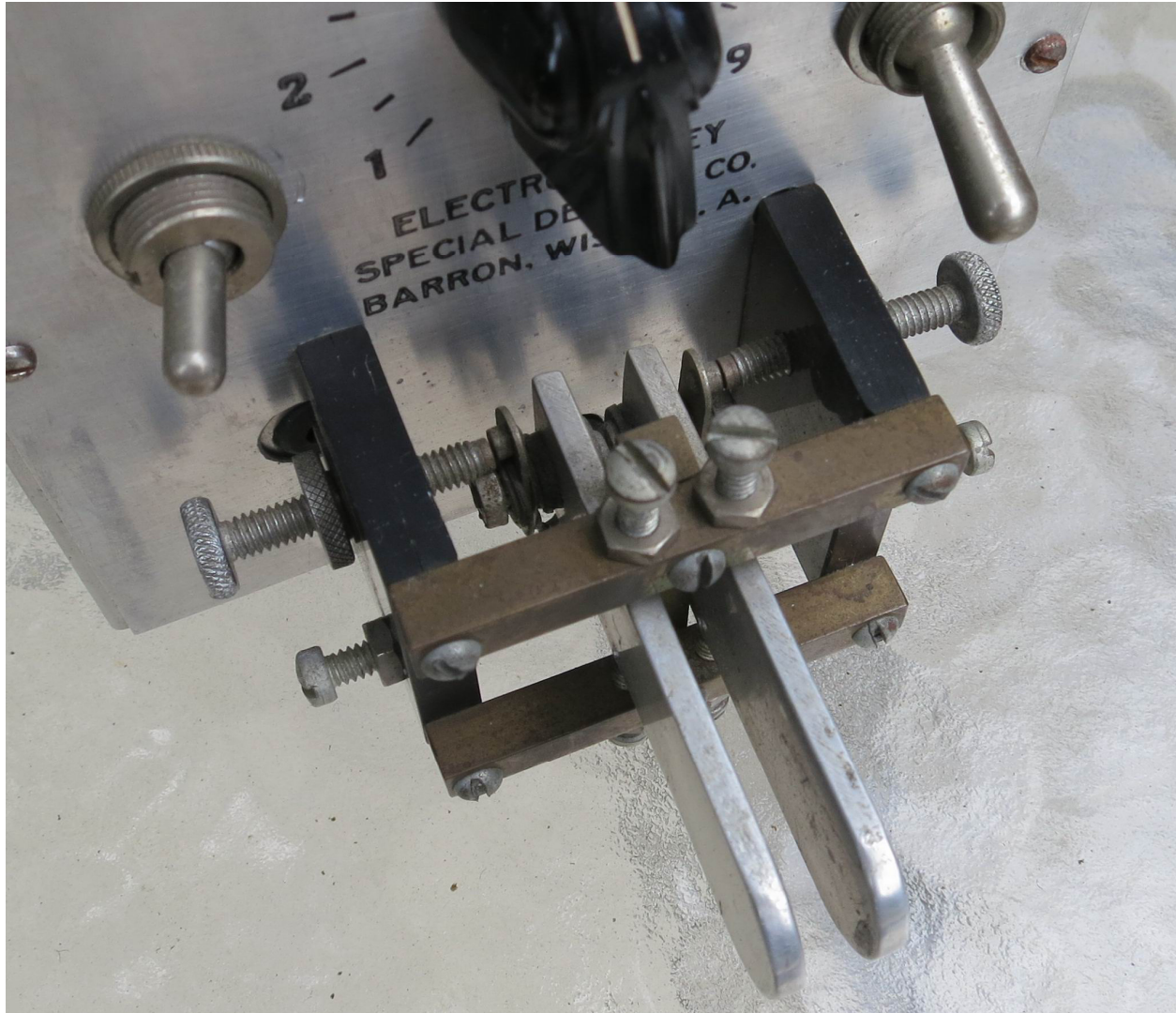


Figure 4. The Model 100A dual-lever keying mechanism.



Figure 5. Inside top chassis view, showing the front panel controls, terminal board, tube layout, and relay.

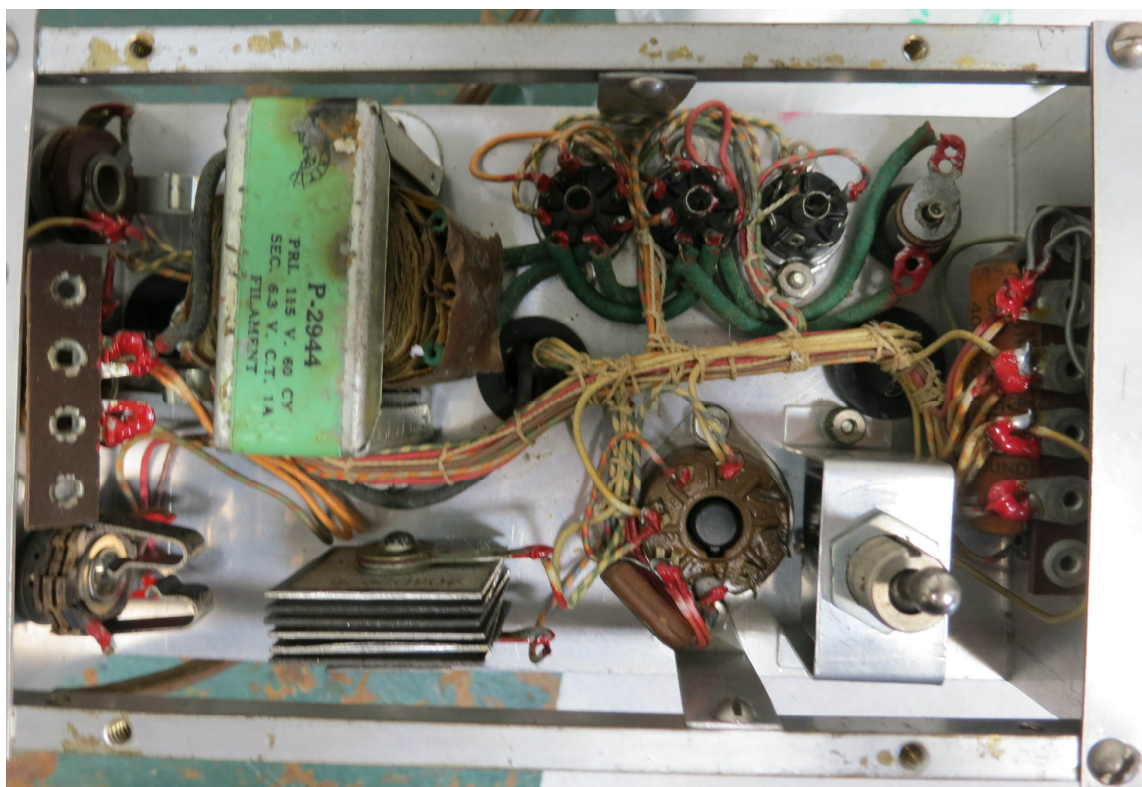


Figure 6. Inside bottom view of the Model 100A. Toggle switch access is through a hole in the bottom plate, as seen in Figure 3.

Other observations seem to suggest the fabricator had a quality assurance or military assembly background. For example, use of cable lacing and red paint to mark solder joints supports the theory that the maker was an experienced assembler. A terminal board is used for resistor, capacitor, and fuse mounting. Several resistors are merely wrapped around terminals and not soldered (see Figure 5), suggesting that someone in the past was experimenting with timing or other code element adjustments. The mechanical design is well thought-out, as seen by the orientation of components and the holes for ventilation and cooling. There is a hole plug on top of the keyer – not to cover up a drilling mistake, but to provide access to the relay arm tension adjustment inside. The extra effort to mount a recessed toggle switch on the bottom of the keyer is meant to keep a seldom-used switch out of the operator’s way; this switch appears to change the polarity of the paddles. The “remote” jack on the rear panel allows an external paddle to be connected. There is a front panel toggle switch to the left of the speed knob. This switch provides a “hold” function for transmitter tune-up. The rear panel jack marked “BK.IN” is most likely meant to mute the receiver while transmitting. It is wired to the normally closed contacts of the keying relay.

Summary

Using the limited information available, it is estimated that the Model 100A may have been produced at some point during the years 1958 through 1961. The estimate is based on introduction of the OB2 tube (1957), beginning widespread usage of commercial dual-lever paddles (approximately 1961), and increasing availability of transistorized keying devices (beginning approximately 1960). The estimation presented above involves some conjecture and educated assumptions based on what is currently known about tube electronic keyers. It is amazing that an unknown-to-most production device such as the Model 100A can resurface in 2016. It is hoped that readers may be able to add some information that helps clear up the mystery of this keyer’s provenance.

Future Work

It is the author’s hope that more information on the Model 100A and on Special Devices will soon be uncovered. In the meantime the circuit will be traced out and a schematic prepared. A mild refurbishment is planned, including replacement of suspect parts, cleaning of paddle and relay contacts, and addition of a 3-wire line cord. There is some evidence of contact pitting and burning on the keying relay, so it’s easy to assume this keyer worked fairly hard in an earlier life. Once the keyer is fully functional, operational characteristics can be better assessed. A future article on the refurbishment and complete operational checkout is a possibility; perhaps then more will have become known about this fascinating keyer.

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EFHW vs. The Home Owners' Association

by Fred Jensen K6DGW

For 38 years, we lived on a five acre “farm” in Auburn, CA in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada in a 2 ½ story home that had been started in 1925 and modified by each resident, including us, twice. There was no homeowners’ association.¹ In the summer, when the oak trees were leafed out, we couldn't see our neighbors, and my 21 meter 25G tower, tribander, various wires, and several VHF/UHF antennas were all but invisible from the road unless you knew where to look. It was a very pleasant place to raise the family. The boys had their dirt bikes, the girls their horses, and in those days, they could disappear for the entire Saturday or Sunday on whatever adventures caught their interest. It was a pretty good radio spot, too, with S2 to S3 noise levels. And so, for 38 years, the birthdays accumulated ... along with the fully predictable physical effects on our bodies and our ability to maintain the place.

It would have been a very difficult place to sell on the market, beginning with “What to do with 38 years of accumulated “stuff” all over the house and in various out-buildings?” Then our oldest daughter said she and our son-in-law wanted to buy it when we wanted to leave. Within 30 days, we had made an offer on a two year old home in Sparks, NV (adjacent to Reno), in a “gated community” ... five bedrooms, one story, three-car garage, small lot ... and “The Vineyards Homeowner's Association” at \$65/mo association dues. And we left the daughter and son-in-law with the “stuff.”

Since I know Tom, K5RC and his Comstock Memorial Station in Virginia City, about 60 km from our new home, I decided to join his crew and establish a remote to W7RN using my K3. This turned out to be a success, and gave me 500 watts into *waaaay* more than a tribander at 21 m. © Remote has its idiosyncrasies, but I got used to the occasional IP-pops and other artifacts, the S-zero noise levels, and an incredibly high coefficient of aerial aluminum and steel at W7RN. It is a shared station, however, and there were times when I wanted to keep skeds with stations in the western US and W7RN wasn't always available.

The HOA rules allow “residential-style” flag poles in the front or rear of the property, and I was sort of planning on something like that in back, maybe in the spring. In the meantime, I ran across an end-fed half-wave antenna which purported to be resonant on all bands, 80 – 10, to not need a ground system, to handle up to 1 KW ICAS, and that cost around \$150. Now, of all the things in ham radio that are pretty much totally misunderstood, antenna theory tops the list or at least is in the top three or four. There is no magic, just mathematics, and essentially everything is predictable. But for \$150 it was worth a shot.

I first suspected a fairly large-scale, non-inductive, 50 Ω resistor in the sealed box with the SO-239 at the end of the 41.5m wire. This wouldn't have been awful. The ubiquitous B-W folded dipole on National Guard armories works well for multi-frequency, short and medium range, HF communications, and I wasn't planning to make the Honor Roll on this wire. However, the SWR plot showed nearly infinite SWR except at the ham bands, so I abandoned the resistor theory.

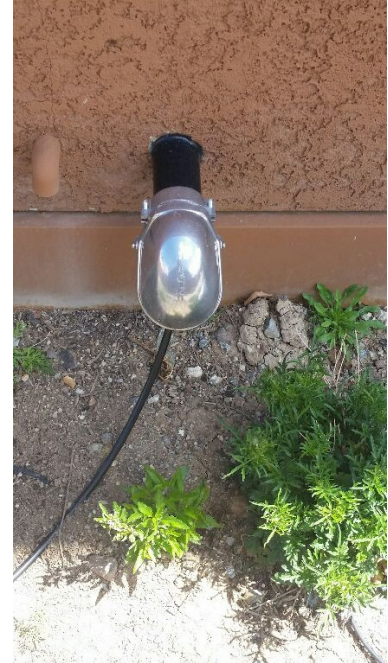
¹There was also no sewer, no cable TV, and no DSL



I strung the wire along the top of the wooden fence on insulators designed for electric fences. A carpenter friend bored a hole in the wall near the

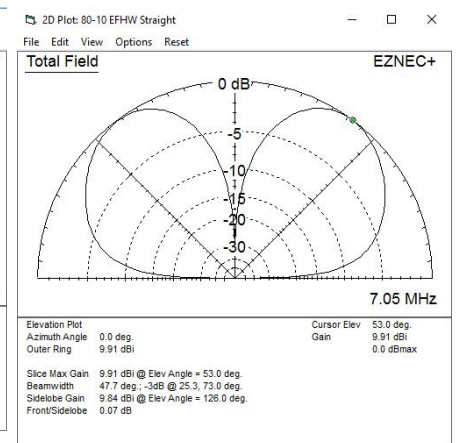
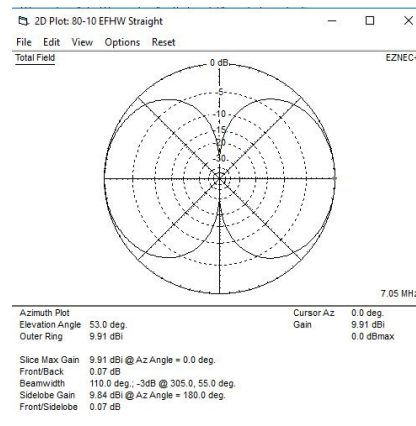
ground and installed a PVC pipe and weather-head that opens into the closet in one of the five bedrooms-turned-shack.

The wire is just barely visible in the above photo. There is a 6-turn inductor wound on a PVC pipe fitting right at the first fence insulator in the photo, but other than that and the transformer box, it is just wire. It continues on the side fence for about 12 m at about 210°, and then turns left along the back fence to the end. The entire wire is a bit over 1.8m off the ground. The antenna analyzer showed essentially resistive loads in the general vicinity of 50 Ω at the lower end of all ham bands except 60 m, just as the literature claimed.

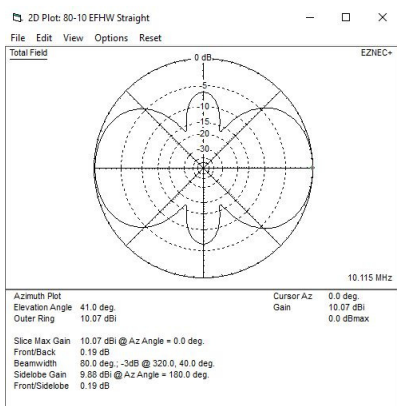
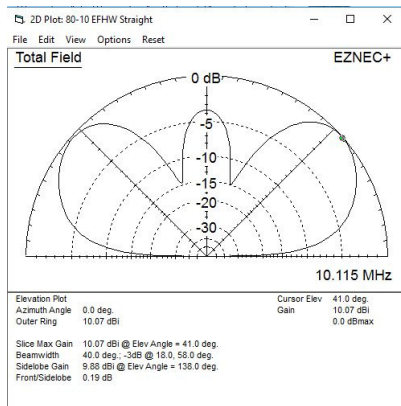


So, does it work? Well ... it works exactly as the mathematics of antenna theory says it should work. On 80m, it radiates straight up and the azimuth pattern is omnidirectional. My primary use of 80 is to check into the Northern California NTS traffic net² and the stations are in Northern California, 150 – 250km from Sparks. I also keep several evening schedules throughout the week with old friends. It works great! Noise runs S4 to S5 but the signals are way over S9. Objective #1: Success.

On 40, it's a full wave wire, and it exhibits the dual-lobe elevation pattern we would expect. Trying it out, mainly working stations doing Summits on the Air activations during daylight, the on-air results bear out the EZNEC models. It's pretty much NVIS, I've had good results at night out to about the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains, which are approaching 900 – 1,000 km from me. Noise on 40 runs about S3 in daylight and close to that at night. I'm fairly certain the 10 dB gain numbers on the patterns are an artifact of the simulation.



² Don't ask "Why?" The NTS is an anachronism of the first order, long since replaced by "everything internet," but I enjoy it.

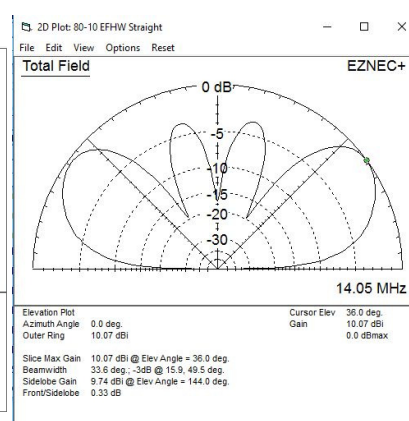
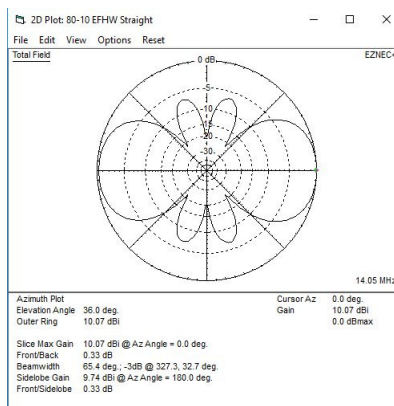


Theory tells us that the patterns should become more complex as the antenna becomes electrically longer and indeed, they do. Note, these models are for a straight wire. Mine has a 90° bend about 1/3 of the way out from the transformer. The elevation patterns for the bent version remain much the same, however the azimuth patterns exhibit less deep nulls which is useful. I am fortunate that our lot is situated such that the wire runs in favorable

directions. However, the directivity exhibited in the model patterns is much less discernible on the air.

20 meters does pretty much what we would expect it to do. I ran a 20-only CWT with it on a particularly rotten Wednesday for propagation, and the distribution of stations' locations with their signal strengths very roughly correlates with the azimuth pattern to the right, although the test is very far from precise.

I've looked at the models for 17, 15, 12, and 10. There are no surprises (nor did I expect any) and, since Cycle 24 is definitely over, they often tend to be somewhat deadsville anyway.



I'm fairly happy with this antenna for local work and I'm seriously re-thinking the flag pole. That would cost about \$1,500 installed and every vertical I've ever used has always been noisier than a horizontal wire. I'm totally within the HOA rules, I didn't have to ask or argue with anyone, and, while we don't get a lot of lightning around here, it's definitely not an attractor. So far, I haven't broken out the KPA500. I'm a little concerned about nuking the neighbor's dog. ☺ And I seem to work with 100 W whatever I can hear anyway.

A word about NEC-2 models and end-fed wires: If you're interested only in the patterns, the models will work fine, just ignore the source data. If you're interested in the feed point impedance (and thus SWR scans), NEC-2 really does not like a source at the end of a conductor and will produce some amazingly wrong results. In this antenna, I suspect the matching transformer is an autotransformer or some equivalent and the coax shield completes the circuit. You can simulate this in the model by connecting a short length of wire to the feed point. It doesn't really matter a lot

how long, four meters gave me an SWR plot that pretty much duplicates what I get from the analyzer on the real antenna.

I bought my antenna from myantennas.com. It was reviewed, sadly somewhat non-technically, in the April QST. It seems well-built, one can probably build one somewhat more cheaply. For the record: I have no fiduciary interest in My Antennas and I'm not even sure where they actually reside. Such is the on-line world these days. The bottom line is, you can surmount HOA restrictions fairly cheaply and easily, and stay on the air in the gated community.

Epilog: We now have a 3-car garage and 2 vehicles. Andrea's CRV goes in. My truck is too long and resides in the driveway. I'm learning to tolerate "The Gate."

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Tales from the Persian Gulf

by Andrés Joven Rivero EA2AJB

One of the most difficult situations I have ever lived, as it happened:

In the beginning of December, 1978, I was sailing as Second Radio Electronic Officer on board the "Nimbus"/A8XF, an oil tanker of seventy five thousand tons. We had fixed route between the port of Durban in South Africa, and Lavan Island, a small port located in the south of Iran, at the entrance of The Ormuz Strait in The Persian Gulf. Sometimes we called once a month at Mombasa in Kenya.

It all happened when we arrived to the approaches of Lavan Island. When we were at approximately five nautical miles, we received a radiotelegram from the port authorities, ordering us to proceed to anchor and stay on stand-by awaiting further orders. At that time, the whole country was on strike because of political turmoil. The situation in Iran was very confused and every day there were demonstrations on the streets led by supporters of Muslim leader Ayatollah Homeini who was trying to make a coup forcing the resignation of the Shah of Iran Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

As a result of all these events, the situation for us began to be a little bit complicated, because we had food supplies only for fifteen days, and fresh water for only a week. Time was going on, things did not improve, and we began to become desperate. We requested urgently fresh water, but nobody wanted to have the responsibility for anything. In other words, the problem was getting worse and we spent a month anchored, including Christmas, with food and water rationed. On the other hand, and fortunately for us, we had bonded stores full of spirits and cigarettes, so when the food finished we exchanged cigarettes and whisky for potatoes, rice, dry fruits, and tinned meat, with other ships in the same situation.

Finally everything became right for us. The political situation in the country had changed. The Shah resigned and the Ayatollah Homeini took power in Iran. He launched a religious dictatorship which affected many people who had to flee the country, becoming political refugees. Workers at the refineries started their work again and during the second week of January, 1979, we received orders to go inside for loading. When loading was finished, and after having taken an emergency food supply, and made bunkering, we left Iran and sailed for Mombasa in Kenya, to complete loading

food and fresh water supplies. Once again at sea, we celebrated Christmas and the new year 1979 at the end of January. I think I shall never forget Christmas, 1978, and the uncertain thirty-two days spent anchored in a remote place in the Persian Gulf.

Here is a photo of one of my other merchant ships:



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CW without the Internet

by Gary Stone N5PHT

Every now and then, when our Internet was down and I sat looking bored in the living room, the XYL would chide me, saying “Can’t you do ham radio without the Internet?” I always said, “Well, sure, but I will wait a little while.” She was more observant than I like to admit.

Palo Duro Canyon State Park

As many CWOps members know, we travel quite a bit – probably about half the year. I fully admit that I often check the Verizon coverage before deciding on a campsite. I do like to be able to keep up with family, Facebook, emails, banking, and other necessary stuff these days. However, I must admit Ham Radio seems very different without the Internet.

Palo Duro Canyon in the Texas panhandle is beautiful, with the campgrounds nestled at the bottom. After a nail biting drive down the steep road you find nice campsites but you will also find NO cell coverage and NO Internet or WiFi. (The State Park does offer WiFi but only from the entrance and that is a few miles back up the hill.)

Ham QSO without Internet

I immediately realized I had to turn off some features on my logging program: call book lookup and club log upload might as well be turned off a few days. The DX Cluster would obviously only bring up an error trying to connect.

The Embarrassing Part

My CW has greatly improved since CWOps but I admit I have sometimes become lazy. I missed right away:

Call Book Lookup: I have grown too accustomed to letting call book alert me (of sorts) if I copy the call wrong. If the call book does not bring up an entry, or name and QTH don't agree to what I copied on air, I am suspect and look further.

DX Cluster: Again, a lazy streak has taken over. Instead of listening carefully up and down the bands for DX, why bother when the cluster looks for you?

RBN: Instead of listening carefully for that station call, just search RBN for the fill.

Working DX that is operating split: It is very easy to rely on the clusters a bit too much instead of the old way of listening and sorting out the patterns of the DX op.

Old Fashioned Fun

Well, I started back to the old ways: carefully listening and scouring the bands for pileups and ops calling CQ, double checking the call as needed. Of course, many of my QSOs are with CW ops I have been chatting with for years, so that is easy. But when I encountered a new call I found myself being extra careful – hopefully enhancing my CW skills.

CWT with No Internet

Again I have gotten into the habit of using RBN as a great aid in the CWT sessions. Well, I enjoyed a Wednesday here Palo Duro Canyon and made all three sessions with me and my ears and the radio. The 0300 session was actually a new record for me with 65 contacts. I even had some nice runs in each session. I did make a late night trip with the laptop to report my scores for CWT, as I discovered a public WiFi about 1000 yards from the campsite!

Summary

Well, in a word or two: “she was right.” Perhaps the chiding of the XYL was deserved. Perhaps spinning the dial and listening without benefit of the cluster, the RBN or the Internet call books is a good exercise for all hams from time to time. So, am I ready to give up those things? NO, I enjoy them too much but these six days of ham radio without the Internet has been a good retraining – at least for myself.

73,

Gary, N5PHT

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CW Academy

Jerry AC4BT

We are now more than halfway through the 2016 Spring CW Academy (CWA) semester. CWA continues to grow and improve on its mission of providing high quality, on-line CW instruction, a unique service to the ham community. We are constantly looking to improve things and make the ‘Student-learning-CW’ experience better and even more rewarding.

We provide new Advisor Orientation training a month before the semester begins and we are now fully utilizing the CWA Advisor listserve to address advisor/student questions and share proven approaches and techniques. The CWA Advisor listserve is a great way to incorporate and disseminate the many years of CW experience to the entire Advisor corps. Answers to common questions are only a click away. Not only are our students learning and becoming better CW operators but also our Advisors are learning from the wealth of knowledge that our veteran CW Advisors possess. In many ways CWA has become a “circle of life” as many students go through our programs, graduate, and they themselves then become new Advisors, providing expert guidance to students eager to learn CW.

To improve the student experience, CWA has added a CWA Spotter page helping the student locate other active CWA students and CWA Advisors to QSO with. The CWA Spotter is based on PA4N’s excellent CW Clubs RBN Bandmap web page which shows recent “spots” of CW club members. PA4N’s page was itself based on the original version by Fabian, DJ1YFK.

The way this works is that the CWA Spotter page will display spots from only the active students enrolled in the current semester, along with active CWA Advisors. The student can then see who is on, what speed they are going at and the frequency. Many thanks to Joe, N3HEE, for putting this together and hosting the server that the CWA Spotter runs on. Here is the URL:

<http://cwa.noip.me/>

Joe, N3HEE, has also provided a meeting area/messaging website specifically for CWA students called “CWA Skeds Page” where students can meet, chat and arrange a CW sked. The URL is:

<http://morsecodemasters.com/blab/blab.php> .

To conclude this month’s CW Academy column, here is a link to a current CWA level 2 student’s blog about his experience and thoughts of the CW Academy experience:

<http://www.k5nd.net/2016/05/cw-academy/>

73,

Jerry AC4BT

CW Academy Manager

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How We Were – I5EFO

by [Hank Garretson W6SX](#)

Emil Focuse, I5EFO, CWops 1486 writes, " ... in year 1996 where, despite having received that year the DXCC Honor Roll, does not seem very happy for his poor station, composed only of a Swan 350B and a HALLICRAFTERS line HT-40 / SX140 / HA5 (for CW only) with Kantronics audio filter." For more info on Emil, check out his page on [QRZ.com](#).



Please send YOUR *How We Were* Photos to w6sx@arrl.net

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CWops Tests

by [Rich Ferch VE3KI](#)

First, a reminder: the CWTs coming up on June 8-9 will be special, slow-speed sessions to mark the graduation of the latest CW Academy classes. Please put your world record hopes on hold, keep your CW speed down to 20 wpm or less, and take the time to welcome new graduates to what may be their first contest-type experience. CWA students and advisors past and present will be sending CWA instead of the CWOps number in their exchange, which should help you to recognize them.

One-third of the way through the year, there are eleven members who have already reached the bronze medal participation level in the CWTs. Five still have perfect attendance records for the year so far: N4FP, N5PHT, UR5MM, VE3KP and W9CC.

This is also the season for face-to-face meetings, including the CW Breakfast at Visalia in April, the CW Weekend in Washington, D.C. June 3-5, and of course the Dayton Hamvention, where you can join the group on Thursday for the dinner being organized by Bill KC4D, and meet other CWOps members at the CWOps booth (BA443). For the more contest-oriented among us, contest-related events such as Contest University and contest-related forums will also be big draws at Dayton. The events at Dayton might have a bit of an effect on the May 18-19 CWT sessions, but judging by last year's scores the impact on participation will not be too severe. This discussion brings to mind a question for our European members: Will there be any CW-related events at Friedrichshafen towards the end of June?

I've been turning my thoughts a bit towards techniques and equipment that can help increase scores in contests, including the CWT mini-tests. Not everyone is shooting for a top score, of course, but many of us have at least some interest in improving our operating abilities and techniques, as measured by scores or perhaps by other measures (such as DXCC count, QTX totals, etc.)

Some of the factors affecting scores are largely outside your direct control. The biggest of these is probably your location. In many contests, the scoring rules give an advantage to some locations over others, such as locations in northern South America or north Africa that have good propagation to nearby large amateur populations in North America and Europe. This is not directly the case in the CWTs, but the demographics of CWOps membership make it easiest to rack up a big CWT score from North America, not quite so easy from Europe (especially in the 0300Z session), and very difficult from other parts of the world, where simply accumulating a dozen or so contacts in the one-hour session can be a major challenge.

Propagation is another such uncontrollable factor and, interestingly, the effects of propagation and of location are not independent. I often notice that in the same CWT sessions where I have great difficulty hearing and being heard, score reports from the southern US states are reporting good conditions. Sometimes, I will see remarks like "20 meters was wide open, but 40 meters was not good." As often as not, those will be the very same sessions where I found my best band was 40 meters while signals on 20 meters were weak and watery here and I had to struggle to make even a few QSOs on 20.

There may not be a lot you can do about your location or propagation, but nevertheless there may be operating techniques you can employ to make the best of what you have to deal with. And of course, amateur radio being a technical hobby, our thoughts naturally turn to equipment and software that can help improve our results. In my next columns I'll be turning my attention to some of these.

We do the CWTs because they're fun, so let's all make sure they continue to be fun for everyone.

73,

Rich, VE3KI

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CWops Member Awards

[Pete W1RM](#) and [Peter W1UU](#)

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.

Call	ACA	CMA	Call	DX Total	Call	WAS	Call	WAE	Call	WAZ
VE3KI	544	3789	W1RM	167	N5RR	50	W1RM	48	W1RM	38
W1RM	517	4135	F6HKA	144	W1RM	50	F6HKA	44	F6HKA	38
AA3B	485	5442	W4VQ	137	W4VQ	50	N5RR	43	W4VQ	37
N8BJQ	458	3893	G4BUE	119	F6HKA	50	G4BUE	43	G4BUE	37
K6RB	456	3403	N5RR	114	W1UU	50	OK1RR	42	N5RR	36
G4BUE	432	3142	OH2BN	112	VE3KI	50	EA8OM	42	VE3KI	35
F6HKA	408	4012	EA8OM	111	G4BUE	50	VE3KI	41	IK0YVV	32
N5RR	387	3781	VE3KI	110	EA8OM	50	W4VQ	40	N5PHT	28
IT9MUO	336	1163	N8BJQ	99	W0EJ	50	OH2BN	40	JF2IWL	25
K1ESE	331	2242	K1ESE	96	F6JOE	50	AA3B	40	W6NS	19
W4VQ	302	2363	SM6CNN	93	W6KY	50	N8BJQ	39		
IT9VDQ	277	804	OK1RR	93	N1EN	50	SM6CNN	37		
DL8PG	275	1702	AA3B	93	N5PHT	50	F6JOE	36		
N5PHT	251	1532	EA1WX	89	F5MNK	50	W0VX	34		
K3WJV	238	882	W0VX	88	K5IX	50	KZ5D	34		
EA8OM	235	2758	N1EN	86	K3SEN	50	KR3E	34		
NA6O	234	1160	W9ILY	85	W9ILY	49	K1ESE	34		
NU7Y	232	479	F6JOE	80	W0VX	49	W1UU	33		
K3SEN	223	845	PA7RA	79	N8BJQ	49	W9ILY	32		
F6JOE	221	2510	KZ5D	78	K6RB	49	N1EN	32		
N1EN	200	1928	IT9MUO	77	K6DGW	49	F5MNK	32		

Call	ACA	CMA		Call	DX Total		Call	WAS		Call	WAE		Call	WAZ
K5IX	200	630		DL8PG	77		K1ESE	49		EA1WX	32			
W6NS	199	970		W1UU	74		GW0ETF	49		PA7RA	31			
W9ILY	184	2575		KR3E	73		AD1C	49		IT9MUO	31			
K6DGW	183	1502		AD1C	73		AA3B	49		DL8PG	31			
W0VX	165	2549		N1ZX	70		WB9G	48		IK0YVV	30			
W1UU	136	1939		F5MKN	68		W6NS	48		NN6T	29			
KE4S	132	709		NN6T	67		SM6CNN	48		IT9VDQ	29			
NN4K	126	755		GW0ETF	67		NN6T	48		N1ZX	28			
K2ZC	112	767		N5PHT	61		NA6O	48		GW0ETF	28			
I5EFO	87	207		IT9VDQ	58		N1ZX	48		AD1C	25			
JF2IWL	83	873		IK0YVV	57		KZ5D	48		K6RB	23			
4X6GP	63	941		W6KY	54		KT5V	48		JF2IWL	23			
AB7MP	46	483		K6RB	54		IK0YVV	48		HB9ARF	23			
KZ5D	0	3239		4Z1UF	50		DL8PG	48		G4DRS	22			
SM6CNN	0	2477		WB9G	48		AB7MP	48		N5PHT	21			
W6KY	0	1840		JF2IWL	47		NU7Y	47		4Z1UF	21			
N2UU	0	1774		G4DRS	45		KR3E	47		K2ZC	20			
EA1WX	0	1655		HB9ARF	41		JF2IWL	47		I5EFO	20			
AD1C	0	1630		KE4S	37		WX7SJ	46		WB9G	19			
OK1RR	0	1618		K6DGW	37		KG5U	46		KE4S	18			
NN6T	0	1577		K3SEN	37		K0DTJ	46		G3YJQ	18			
GW0ETF	0	1451		K2ZC	37		IT9VDQ	46		KG5U	17			
KG5U	0	1322		W0EJ	36		EA1WX	46		W6KY	16			
PA7RA	0	1200		KG5U	35		NN4K	45		K3WJV	16			
KR3E	0	1136		W6NS	33		KE4S	45		NN4K	15			
F5MKN	0	1111		NA6O	32		K3WJV	45		K3SEN	15			
PA4N	0	955		KT5V	32		K2ZC	45		KT5V	11			
N1ZX	0	940		G3YJQ	27		IT9MUO	45		K6DGW	11			
WB9G	0	888		NN4K	26		PA7RA	44		W0EJ	10			
W5ASP	0	869		K3WJV	25		OK1RR	44		NA6O	10			
KT5V	0	814		K0DTJ	25		KM4FO	43		G3XLG	10			
IK0YVV	0	767		I5EFO	24		HB9ARF	43		W6NS	8			
W0EJ	0	754		NU7Y	21		G4DRS	43		W5TM	7			
HB9ARF	0	723		K5IX	20		OH2BN	42		G0DJA	7			
K0DTJ	0	668		G3XLG	18		NV9X	38		K5IX	6			
WX7SJ	0	610		WT2P	14		G3YJQ	37		K0DTJ	6			
WT2P	0	574		AB7MP	14		4Z1UF	36		KM4FO	5			
OH2BN	0	530		W5TM	11		WT2P	34		WT2P	4			
KM4FO	0	500		KM4FO	10		I5EFO	33		AB7MP	3			
N7WY	0	403		G0DJA	10		W5TM	32		NV9X	1			
G4DRS	0	353		NV9X	4		G3XLG	31						
W5TM	0	235		KE6K	4		KE6K	17						
G3YJQ	0	234					G0DJA	8						
G3XLG	0	201												

Call	ACA	CMA		Call	DX Total		Call	WAS		Call	WAE		Call	WAZ
NV9X	0	149												
KE6K	0	116												
G0DJA	0	23												
PA1FOX	0	5												

73,

Pete W1RM

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New Members

[Colin Jenkins KU5B](#)

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

1614	G4RMV*	Mike
1615	G0PNM	Pete
1616	KE8G	Jim
1617	VA3PM*	Pierre
1618	W9GL	Jim
1619	AI8Z	Mike
1620	W7IY*	Stu
1621	K7AZT*	Paul
1622	VA7ST*	Bud
1623	W2VM*	Craig

* = Life Member

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Current Nominees

As of May 11, 2016:

Need Sponsors: W5BQ, KC3CVN, W5LNI, W2APF, WA5PFJ, K5TU

Invitations Extended: none (!)

For more details about nominees and up-to-date status, check the “Members Only” pages 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

by [John Huffman K1ESE](#)

QTX is a way of counting conversational CW QSOs. One point is awarded for each QSO of 20 minutes or longer. We have two ways to recognize QTX activities - the QTX Plaque and the QTX Achievement Medal.

There have been some interesting exchanges on the mailing list about rag-chewing and contesting. CWops can be proud that we recognize conversational CW activities. But it doesn't have to be either/or. Several of the folks listed below do both. As long as it's fun and it's a chance to use CW, why not?

Here's the latest tally of this month's CW conversations of 20 minutes or longer. Remember, you can work anyone, anywhere, as many times as you like. They all count for QTX.

QTX Monthly Standings

Below find the April QTX reports received:

<u>Call</u>	<u>Apr</u>
KI4XH	65
K1ESE	61
WB6BEE	59
K5KV	42
N5IR	41

AC4BT	32
K5YQF	32
K4AHO	25
KC0VKN	22
KB6NU	21
NN6T	19
K6HP	17
K6RB	11
HB9CVQ	11
KE6OIO	10
WA8IWK	10
W3WHK	9
K3TN	5
I5EFO	4
N9SE	4
N5PHT	3
K0DTJ	3
K6DGW	2

April was Fred's KI4XH month. Fred averaged just over two chats per day. Right behind were your moderator K1ESE and Don WB6BEE. Don is at or near the top every month. Benny K5KV scaled back from a big March tally to fourth place with Bill N5IR right behind.

We had the same total of 23 reporting stations in April and QSOs were down 76 to 508.

Personal bests for the year were submitted by K6HP, K6RB, K3TN, N5PHT, and K0DTJ. K6DGW sent in his first report of the year.

QTX Medal Standings

We award QTX medals for the following totals at the end of the year:

Gold Medal - 400 QTX points

Silver Medal - 300 QTX points

Bronze Medal - 200 QTX points

It will be fun to see if you can accumulate the contacts needed to reach each level. Average about 18 rag chews each month to receive an award.

QTX Year to Date

<u>Call</u>	<u>YTD</u>
WB6BEE	258
KI4XH	249
K5KV	238
K1ESE	217
N5IR	178
AC4BT	163
K5YQF	143
K4AHO	97
NN6T	96
KB6NU	95
KC0VKN	77
K6HP	51
W3WHK	47
N1ZX	39
KE6OIO	37
K6RB	34
WA8IWK	28
HB9CVQ	26

I5EFO	23
N9SE	20
WC5W	17
K3TN	9
N5PHT	5
K0DTJ	5
W5JQ	5
K6DGW	2

Once again, Don WB6BEE is on top. Fred KI4XH has moved ahead of Benny K5KV in second and third, respectively.

Now that we have four months in the books, we have stations qualifying for medals. To date we have four Bronze Medals earned – WB6BEE, KI4XH, K5KV, and K1ESE. At the current pace we'll have 11 medal winners by the end of the year. But several others will get there by picking up the pace. And, it's not too late to start now and still earn a medal this year. Good luck to all!

Thanks to all for your participation.

73,

John K1ESE, CWops #792, *QTX Manager*

QTX – Encouraging Conversational CW

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Upcoming CW Operating Events

[Joe Staples W5ASP](#)

This brief list of operating events is intended to provide members with options for using and improving their CW skills in less intense and more casual on-the-air activities.

As mentioned before, this is one of the slower periods of the year for the code operator. Other than WPX CW and IARU, only Field Day offers a real opportunity in the near term to engage in serious CW. There is an old Wall Street adage "Sell in May and go away" Perhaps "QRT in May and go away" might be more appropriate. Yet there are various offerings listed below that can fill the need to exercise the fist.

The good old reliable WPX CW is always a must for the intrepid CW operator. Since it's an "Everybody works everyone" event, things are not at the mercy of the "Gods of Propagation." Anyone can find their particular niche and come away satisfied. Don't miss it.

I have mentioned the FISTS group in this column several times. According to their website "FISTS supports the use, preservation and education of Morse code. The club is devoted exclusively to CW operators, CW operating and people who are passionate about Morse code." Its membership is perhaps ten times that of CWOps. Unfortunately, their operating events don't seem to draw the level of participation experienced by CWOps. Perhaps some stimulus from our group would "stir the pot" a bit ... i.e. a helping hand to other like-minded CW operators.

The UN DX CONTEST is organized and held by the Kazakhstan Federation of Radiosport and Radioamateur (KFRR), the country's national amateur radio society. It's a "try it ... you may like it" sort of thing.

Also, take notice of the WWSA CW CONTEST. According to its sponsors, it is becoming a "classic of the telegraph amateur radio worldwide." It is the result of two groups joining together ... the Group Pica Pau Carioca in Rio de Janeiro and the CW Group of Argentine.

With the relentless demise of the sun spots this North-South path may be the answer.

Till next time ... Keep on pounding.

MAY/JUNE EVENTS

CQ-M International DX Contest
<http://www.cq-m.ru/en/rules.html>

1200Z, May 14th to 1159Z, May 15th

FISTS Spring Unlimited Sprint http://fistsna.org/operating.html#sprints	1700Z-2100Z, May 14 th
CQ WW WPX Contest, CW http://www.cqwpw.com/rules.htm	0000Z, May 28 th to 2359Z, May 29 th
SEANET Contest http://www.seanet2016.com/contest.php	1200Z, Jun 6th to 1200Z, Jun 7th
Arkansas QSO Party http://www.arkqsoparty.com/#!/rules/c205y	1400Z, May 14 th to 0200Z, May 15 th
Alabama QSO Party http://www.alabamagsoparty.org/2016/2016Rules.pdf	1600Z, Jun 4 to 0400Z, Jun 5
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, May 13 th
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, May 20 th
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, May 27 th
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jun 3 rd
NCCC Sprint	0230Z-0300Z, Jun 10 th
NCCC Sprint http://www.ncccsprint.com/rules.html	0230Z-0300Z, Jun 17 th
NAQCC CW Sprint	0030Z-0230Z, May 12 th
NAQCC CW Sprint	0030Z-0230Z, May 19 th
NAQCC CW Sprint www.naqcc.info/	0030Z-0230Z, Jun 15th
SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	1200Z, May 7 th to 2400Z, May 8 th
SKCC Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, May 25 th
SKCC Weekend Sprintathon http://www.skccgroup.com/operating_activities/weekday_sprint/	1200Z, Jun 11 th to 2400Z, Jun 12 th
MARAC USA QSO Party	1400Z-2400Z, May 14 th and 1400Z-2400Z, May 15 th
http://countyhunter.com/MARAC%20RULES%202016.htm	
UN DX Contest http://undxc.kz/bez-rubriki/2015-2/	0600Z-2100Z, May 21 st
GACW WWSA CW DX Contest http://www.wwsatest.org/english	1500Z, Jun 11 th to 1500Z, Jun 12 th

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