2012 ARRL DX Phone Results

I exceeded last year’s score so life is good. — AA6K

Ward Silver, NØAX, n0ax@arrl.net

This year’s phone weekend of the ARRL International DX Contest was eagerly awaited by thousands around the world after last year’s oh-so-welcome return of the sunspots and the good conditions that graced the CW weekend fourteen days prior. Well, fourteen days is one-half of a solar spin on its axis and those good conditions were pointed somewhere else than Earth! Browsing Soapbox comments that came in with the logs, the strange and often-unexpected propagation was on the minds of many! 15 meter Single-Band competitor Mike, G4IUF wrote, “Weird day, struggled till one-half hour after sunset, then (the band) went mad for 45 minutes, then (it went) auroral, then died!!"

What’s the deal? After having a look at the solar and geomagnetic data from NOAA the answer is pretty clear — we were a little bit early…or maybe the bands were a little bit late. The very day after the contest (of course) the solar flux jumped a dozen points, staying above 130 for a week! Cycle 24 has been nothing if not erratic — the Sun can’t quite make up its mind whether to make like the peak or the pits. This contest’s conditions were very similar to those of 2004.

How did that play out on the bands? A lot of stations decided to spend the weekend fishing at 10 Meter Lake instead of on a lower band, hoping for breakthroughs that turned out to be far and few between. Comparing the Single-Band logs to 2004, the shift was from 40 meters (2004 was a post-peak year and many were anticipating lower MUF) to 10 meters.

The odd conditions manifested themselves in unexpected ways at stations large and small. Contest veteran John, K1AR relates his experience at super-station K3LR on 20 meters: “We were doing our usual ‘waiting for EU to open’ thing on Saturday…one unanswered CQ after another. Then, literally like someone turned on a switch, in the course of one CQ I had an instant pileup and a 225-hour after that. I’ve never heard anything like it. Usually, the rate builds over a 15-20 minute period, but this time it just started like someone turned on a light. Very strange indeed.” Elsewhere, 10 meter operators report openings on Friday evening that heightened anticipation of bigger things to come but although the multiplier totals were good, the depth of the openings to large numbers of stations just didn’t materialize.

Participation was quite lively, regardless, with a record 3527 logs submitted (1869 W/VE logs and 1658 DX logs) that exceeded last year’s 3343 logs by a few percent. No doubt this is at least partially an aftereffect of the awesome 2011 10 Meter Contest conditions that saw a surge to more than 5000 submitted logs. Well, as many stations found out, even if conditions aren’t at their peak, just being on the bands is a lot of fun!

The number of logs contributed to club totals in the ARRL Affiliated Club Competition was also up — to 2009 from last year’s 1978. Overall, club log submissions jumped by about 12% with all of the increase in the rapidly-growing Medium and Local categories. The word must be getting around that contesting is a lot of fun and participating as a club makes it even more fun!

Yeah, yeah…but were we making more QSOs? Despite all of the propagational hand-wringing, DX stations logged 815,208 QSOs with us and we logged 669,554 with them. That’s a little more activity on our side and a little less activity on their side — just 4000 QSOs below last year’s totals. Once again, about 10% of the QSOs “went missing” between the log sheets and the log checking — a fraction we should work on reducing. Offering to help other club members send in a log is often a good way to help a potential contester become more active, whether they are new to HF or just haven’t joined yet.

Categorically Speaking

A good measure of the activity of different stations is to look at the top single-band QSO totals from DX and domestic stations. The 2011 10 Meter Contest’s long coattails were in evidence as Sergio, PP5JR logged a whop-
ping 3888 QSOs on 10 meters as PX5E. In addition, HK1T logged 3449 stations on 20 meters and the gang at TI5N pulled in 2323 different calls. From here at home, the 20 meters and the gang at TI5N pulled in addition, HK1T logged 3449 stations on W/VE Region Leaders

**Northeast Region** (New England, Hudson and Atlantic Divisions; Maritime and Quebec Sections)

- W2RE 4,246,440 C
- K3LR 2,077,672 C
- W3BGN 2,847,960 C
- AA1K 1,230,552 C
- NCI1 (K9PW, op) 1,192,464 C

**Southeast Region** (Delta, Roanoke and Southeastern Divisions)

- K1TO 3,258,036 C
- VE3EJ 2,077,672 C
- W3BGN 1,230,552 C
- VE3A 1,819,085 C
- K6GL 1,192,464 C

**Central Region** (Central and Great Lakes Divisions; Ontario Section)

- VE3EJ 3,470,360 C
- VE3A 2,077,672 C
- VE3A 1,819,085 C
- VE3A 1,192,464 C

**Midwest Region** (Dakota, Midwest, Rocky Mountain and West Gulf Divisions; Manitoba and Saskatchewan Sections)

- N2IC 3,349,500 C
- KSTR 2,830,449 C
- K7HU (K9KX, op) 476,383 C
- KB9E 175,161 C

**West Coast Region** (Pacific, Northwestern and Southern Divisions; Alberta, British Columbia and NWT Sections)

- N6PW 2,966,301 C
- K7RL 2,834,895 C
- K7A 2,700,153 C
- K7C 843,453 C

The top-single band DXCC hunters were once again at K3LR as the 20 meter team of K1AR and N2NT bagged 140 multipliers. Single-Band logs from W/VE stations were down from last year (214 compared to 247) but the 10 meter count was up to 65 — only the band count to show an increase.

Recovering nicely from last year’s single-band slump, 560 SOSB logs were received from DX call signs. As Figure 2 shows, the DX stations got busy on 15 and 10 meters. DXCC band-entity chasers, take note! Another clear trend is the growing number of entries in the Single-Op, Unlimited (SOU) division, with 1007 logs from Single-Ops.

### Continental Leaders

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**North America**

- Single Operator High Power 8P5A
- Single Operator Low Power KB3TEJ
- Single Operator Assisted, High Power W47JA
- Single Operator Assisted, Low Power W9NP
- Single Operator 160 Meters K4VZF
- Single Operator 80 Meters W3AGK
- Single Operator 40 Meters ZF2AH
- Single Operator 20 Meters CE6Z
- Single Operator 15 Meters K2P2M
- Single Operator 10 Meters W8GQA
- Multisupplier, Single Transmitter, High Power VP8H
- Multisupplier, Single Transmitter, Low Power HI3K
- Multisupplier, Two Transmitters T8M

**Oceania**

- Single Operator High Power VK7ZE
- Single Operator Low Power K6ECU
- Single Operator QRP DU1AJ
- Single Operator Assisted, Low Power ZL3O
- Single Operator 80 Meters YB1ALL
- Single Operator 40 Meters KH6QJ
- Single Operator 15 Meters KH6QJ
- Single Operator 10 Meters KG5DX
- Multisupplier, Single Transmitter, High Power KH7X
- Multisupplier, Two Transmitters KH6LC

**South America**

- Single Operator High Power 9Y4W
- Single Operator Low Power P40V
- Single Operator QRP PJ4G
- Single Operator Assisted, Low Power P43E
- Single Operator 160 Meters L29QR
- Single Operator 80 Meters YV8T
- Single Operator 40 Meters PY8R
- Single Operator 15 Meters PX8E
- Multisupplier, Single Transmitter, High Power L1UM
- Multisupplier, Two Transmitters PT5
- Multisupplier, Two Transmitters LP1H

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category both here in the US and Canada and around the world. The red line in Figure 2 shows that the total number of Single-Operator logs is steadily increasing and more of them are in the growing fraction of SOU logs. While SOAB-HP representation is holding steady, SOAB-HP and SOSB are not as more stations are moving to the online-based category to make use of information about the contest from other participants.

Little Pistols and part-time or casual operators are the often-unsung majority of contest activity. Figure 1 shows that almost 58% of all logs received contained 200 or fewer QSOs. This fraction is steadily increasing, which I believe is a healthy trend for radiogram in general. The operators sending in small logs represent the vital “new blood” that any competitive activity needs to stay healthy. Welcome!

**Records**

As in 2011, another pair of all-time records was set. Jeff, K1ZM decided to tackle 160 meters from his station on Prince Edward Island, VY2ZM. He was rewarded with not only the Canadian record but the all-time W/VE record for SOSB-160. Whatever he puts his mind to, the VY2ZM hardware is ready and able to contend...If he can make it through the snowdrifts! Jeff owns five ARRL DX Phone records, including one second-time all-time (SOAB-QRP in 2001), as either VY2ZM or K1ZM.

The other new all-time record reflects a really exceptional effort. Not only did Dan, W7WA win the SOSB-40 W/VE title, he set the all-time record for 40 meters and turned in a Golden log (a log with no detected errors)! Not only that, at 965 QSOs, it’s the largest Golden Log that I’ve seen in my ten years of writing up these contest results. When you consider how difficult 40 meter activity is, those 17 extra logs made a lot of difference. Dan, W7WA continues to improve, we’ll see more of these records topping before Cycle 24 decides to call it a day.

**Challenge**

They’re up! They’re down! They’re up again! They’re up! They’re down! They’re up! And not only that, at 965 QSOs, it’s the largest Golden Log that I’ve seen in my ten years of writing up these contest results. Dan, W7WA continues to improve, we’ll see more of these records topping before Cycle 24 decides to call it a day.

**Club**

They’re up! They’re down! They’re up again! The knock-down, drag-out slugfest between the Frankford Radio Club (FRC) and Yankee Clipper Contest Club (YCCC) reversed again this year, scrumbling the Club Competition table score card. YCCC was edged out of the top Unlimited club position by the slimiest of margins but jumped back up off the mat and delivered a slobber-knocker of 245 Mpoints to FRC’s 214 Mpoints. YCCC’s log totals jumped from 184 last year to 201 this year and those 17 extra logs made a lot of challenge by the K8AZ group. As technology continues to improve, we’ll see more of these records toppled before Cycle 24 decides to call it a day.
Among the Medium clubs, the North Coast Contesters looked a little vulnerable last year...but not in 2012 as they won the gavel going away. The Hudson Valley Contesters and DXers club put 50% more points on the board to overtake the competition and place second. Out west, the Orca DX and Contest Club made a big jump and more than doubled their totals — this will play well in the annual Pacific Northwest Challenge Cup competition (click “PNW Traveling Trophy” at www.wwdx.org) as all three of the major Northwestern Division clubs are closely spaced.

Holy smokes, the Local clubs are coming out of the woodwork with 37 different entries this year — excellent! Last year’s winner, the Iowa DX and Contest Club was dethroned by the Central Virginia Contest Club’s strong surge in points and logs. The Hilltop Transmitting Association (love that name!) stole a march on everybody to place 3rd. Watch out for the Kansas City operators — the two KC clubs combined would have placed 3rd easily!

**Down to the Wire(less)**

Would you take a look at the W/VE SOAB-HP Top Ten! The race was decided by just 3% and the first four places were separated by a very competitive 12% top to bottom. In W/VE SOSB-20, the 2nd-3rd-4th race for place and show was extremely tight — all three stations were within 1% of each other and from opposite sides of the continent. The W/VE M2 Top Ten was also tightly packed with about 4% separating the first few places. K3LR and W3LPL roared through the entire race neck-and-neck with the K3LR team managing a slim 5% victory.

Down in the Caribbean, 2nd and 3rd place in SOAB-HP was decided by only 3% as N3AD piloted V26M ahead of N2TK at KP2M. The SOAB-LP race was just as tight: W5AJ at the P40V station eked out a 5% win over HI3TEJ. One of the tightest races in the whole contest turned out to be in the DX SOSB-10 category — 0.2% was the difference between competitors on nearly opposite sides of the planet as PR5B with PY2LSM at the mike broke the tape just ahead of KH7Y. The big DX multiplier teams were just as competitive as here at home — PJ2T was only 1.3% ahead of P40L when the scoring was over and VP5H was hot on their tails.

**Accuracy**

Accurate operating — as the preceding section indicates — is deciding more and more races around the world. Highly prized, the skill of pulling an entire correct call out of the pileups is something to which we should all aspire — Big Gun and Little Pistol alike. With over 90% of all contacts being checked by software, being able to complete the QSO with all the information correct has never been more important. And isn’t that one of the reasons for having contests, anyway — to hone our operating skills for when more than a Top Ten finish is riding on accurate communication?

Take a look at the top five Accuracy Indexes and the Accuracy Records achieved by SOAB-HP/LP, SOU-HP/LP and MO stations. (See the sidebar for an explanation of the index.) Improving your own accuracy index from year to year is an excellent goal. Also note the Top Ten Golden Logs — the largest logs that incurred no log-checking penalties.

**DXing Under the Sun’s Thumb**

What is it like to operate from one of the rarest of all domestic multipliers during a DX contest? Surely it must be non-stop pileup action with the DX rolling in! Well, not quite, as John, VE8EV writes online in “ARRL DX - The Best of Times, The Worst of Times...” (ve8ev.blogspot.com/2012/03/arrl-dx-best-of-times-worst-of-times.html).
Good Practices, Please

There is always room for improvement on our operating practices — maybe that's why they call it "practice"! Well, not really, but if you're operating practices — maybe that's why they call it "practice"! Well, not really, but if you're...  

Identification — don't waste the time of others, give your call!  

Accuracy — no guessing, get it right or don't log it  

If you get a chance, watch for a Contest University (contestuniversity.com) or similar program coming to a convention or hamfest near you. These one-day packages of courses are a focused way of gaining a lot of know-how — very quickly — kind of like a contest!

A New Voice in the Pileups

It's always great to learn of a new operator making a splash on the bands. This year, we heard of a new voice from the far Northwest — Alaska, in fact, as related by Larry, KL7/NIIX. "We were no match for Mother Nature this weekend, but the team refused to cave and spirits remained high throughout the ups and downs of propagation. KL7/NIIX's 12-year-old granddaughter, Dale, proved to be an incredible contest-in-the-making. She..."
Sponsored Plaque Winners

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of numerous clubs and individuals, we are pleased to announce the winners of a sponsored ARRL DX Phone plaque. The ARRL wishes to thank the plaque sponsors for their continued commitment to the ARRL Plaque Program. Without their support and dedication, the Plaque Program would not be possible.

Unsponsored plaques may be purchased by the plaque winner. If you wish to purchase an unsponsored plaque or order a duplicate plaque, contact ARRL Contest Contact Manager Sean Kutzko, K0XX, at 860-594-0023 or by e-mail at kdx@arrl.org. The cost for plaques is $75 (includes shipping).

Plaque Category

W/VE Single Operator High Power Phone
W/VE 1.8 MHz Phone
W/VE 3.5 MHz Phone
W/VE 7 MHz Phone
W/VE 21 MHz Phone
W/VE 28 MHz Phone
W/VE Single Operator QRP Phone
W/VE Single Operator Assisted, High Power Phone
World Single Operator High Power Phone
World 1.8 MHz Phone
World 7 MHz Phone
World 14 MHz Phone
World 28 MHz Phone
Asia Multioperator Single Transmitter, High Power Phone
North America Multioperator Single Transmitter, High Power Phone
World Multioperator Two Transmitters Phone
Japan Single Operator Low Power Phone
Seventh Call Area Single Operator High Power Phone
World Multioperator Unlimited Phone
Asia Single Operator QRP Phone
World Single Operator Phone Low Power
Canada Single Operator Low Power Phone
Great Lakes Division Single Operator Unlimited, High Power Phone

Plaque Category

Plaque Winner
Frankford Radio Club, VE3EZ
Butch Greve, W9EWC Memorial, KV1ZB
Jeffrey Briggs, KV2Z
Charles Wooten, NF4A
Northern Illinois DX Association, NT0D
Ralph Fontaine AF7DX
Jeffrey Briggs, K1Y2M
Petie Carter, K3SWV Memorial, K3WW
North Jersey DX Association, BP5A
Fred Race, W8FRR, In Memory of ZL2BT
Jim Rafferty, N8RJ Memorial - Cayman ARS, ZP2AH
Don Wallace, W6AM, Memorial Award
North Shennondah DX Association, NS5DX
Yankee Clipper Contest Club, RUIJFM
Nick Lash, K9LRL
W6NL and K6EBL
Western Washington DX Club, JH4UYB
Willamette Valley DX Club, N9RV
Stanley Cohen, W6BCQ
Sean Kutzko, K9X9
Arizona Outlaws Contest Club, PA6V (W5AJ, op)
Contest Club Ontario, VA3SGW
Northern Ohio DX Association, W8MJ

Propagation Indices for ARRL DX Phone

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Data from www.swpc.noaa.gov/ftpmenu/indices/old_indices.html

Accuray Index Records

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</tbody>
</table>

Active Winning Streaks (3 or More Wins)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call</th>
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<th>Category</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N1UR</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>SOAB-LP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W5PR</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>SOAB-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1LZ</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>MS-HP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K3LR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>MM (new)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Category Abbreviations

- W/VE: Single Operator (SOAB — All Band, SO — Single Band, SOU — Unlimited)
- HP/LP/QRP: High Power, Low Power, QRP
- MS: Multioperator, Single-Transmitter
- M2: Multioperator, Two-Transmitter
- MM: Multioperator, Multiple Transmitters

Accuracy Index Records

- Bold indicates an all-time record

results (www.arrl.org/contest-results-articles) for more commentary and the following features:

- A PDF file of Top Ten call signs since 2002
- Changes in QSOs and multipliers as a percentage of the 2002 totals
- DX entries tracked by category from year to year
- Soapbox comments from W/VE and DX logs

You’ll find a Regional Analysis for your Division or Continent written by a volunteer author from the area. There’s also a close look at the results from the Caribbean’s annual festival of DXing frenzy.

The Soapbox comments are great fun to read. Some are a simple “thanks, had fun” and others are detailed observations about the contest and the equipment used to participate. The ARRL Soapbox web pages (www.arrl.org/soapbox) contain more photos and stories, too. Even more Soapbox commentary is compiled by Dink, N7WA from the popular 3830 score posting website at www.eskimocom/~mdink/3830/. Browsing through all of these comments, you can find yourself thinking, “Were all of these people in the same contest?”

Concluding Remarks

Next year — even with a slowing solar cycle predicted — should be even better. Get the 2013 ARRL DX contests (February 18-19 and March 3-4) on your calendar now, polish up those high-band antennas and get ready for a healthy dose of radiosport! — 73, Ward Silver, N0AX

quickly learned the ropes of running and Search-and-Pounce with Win-Test. She may end up being better suited for CW and RTTY contests, though, because her high-energy requires a lot of stoking. A mouth full of sunflower seeds is incompatible with a phone contest…Larry, KL7/N1TX

Maybe there are other Dales near your contest club? Why not offer them some chair time and be prepared for a surprise!

Extended Results

Look to the online extended version of these

first festival of DXing frenzy.

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Two weeks after activating M5E during the CW weekend, Seppo, OH1VR and Kazu, JK3GAD traveled to California where they helped activate the W6NB station as W6WB. From left to right are Seppo, OH1VR; Kazu, JK3GAD, and Al, AD6E. Host Oliver, W6NV and Denny, KX7M are not in the picture. [OH1VR photo]