

ARRL ARDF Coordinator

Report to the ARRL Board of Directors

January 2019

To the Board of Directors:

This report of the ARRL Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) Coordinator to the ARRL Board of Directors covers the period July 16, 2018 to January 7, 2019.

Introduction and Purpose

As defined by the Terms of Reference document of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) Region 1 ARDF Working Group, "ARDF is a technical sport activity within the framework of the amateur service. It deals with the taking of radio bearings and finding hidden transmitters, constructing relevant equipment, and the training of amateurs involved in and with the organizing of relevant sport and social events."

The purpose of the national ARDF Coordinator position is to promote the development of this sport within the country and to work with ARDF Coordinators of other IARU countries to organize ARDF events and activities. The focus is on international-rules on-foot foxhunting (also called foxtailing and radio-orienting), but not mobile hidden transmitter hunting.

IARU ARDF World Championships 2018

The 19th IARU ARDF World Championships took place near Sokcho, Korea from September 2 through 7, 2018. For the eleventh time, a delegation of radio-orienters represented USA and ARRL at the World Championships and for the seventh time, USA's team was on the medal stand. There were separate classic ARDF events on separate days for each competitor on eighty meters and two meters, each with up to five transmitters scattered in a large forested area. In addition, there were ARDF sprints and foxoring competitions. Each IARU society is invited send up to three competitors in each of the eleven IARU age/gender categories to the World Championships. In all, over 300 competitors representing 29 nations took to the courses.

Invitations to join Team USA 2018 were based on performances and standings in the Eighteenth USA ARDF Championships (California, June 2018) and the Seventeenth USA ARDF Championships (Ohio, August 2017). Eight men and three women traveled on this year's team, representing six states and ranging in age from 35 to 76.

2018 ARDF Team USA Members:

Name/Callsign	Cat	State
Vadim Afonkin KB1RLI	M50	MA
Ruth Bromer WB4QZG	W60	NC
Joseph Burkhead	M40	CO
Robert Cooley KP6VSE	M70	CA
Kenneth Harker WM5R	M40	TX
Joseph Huberman K5JGH	M60	NC
Lori Huberman	W21	CA
Nicolai Mejevoi	M50	FL
Alla Mezhevaya	W35	FL
Eduard Nasybulin	M21	CA
William Wright WB6CMD	M60	CA

On Tuesday, the first day of competition, Ruth Bromer, WB4QZG captured individual third place in the W60 category in the 80-meter foxoring competition. On Wednesday, in the first classic ARDF event, USA's M50 competitors won bronze medals in the team competition on two meters. They were Vadim Afonkin, KB1RLI, Nicolai Mejevoi, and Bill Wright, WB6CMD. Also on Wednesday, the team of Ken Harker, WM5R and Joe Burkhead won bronze in the M40 category on 80 meters. Note that team awards are based on the aggregate scores of the individual team members. The team members are not permitted to assist one another on the courses.

At the awards ceremony after the second classic event on Friday, Vadim Afonkin, KB1RLI accepted his gold medal for individual first place on 80 meters in M50 category. In that same event, the M50 category team of Vadim Afonkin, KB1RLI, Nicolai Mejevoi, and Bill Wright, WB6CMD again took bronze in the team standings, this time on eighty meters. Team USA's total of ten medals is the largest number of medals won by our team at a World Championships since USA began participating.

Team members were responsible for their own registration/room/board fees and for transportation expenses to and from Korea. As in years past, thanks are due to the ARRL CFO and Controller for executing the currency exchange and transfer of individual advance entry fees to the organizers.

Prior to the championships, informal ARDF training sessions took place for team members at Mt. Pinos in California on the weekend of August 11 - 12.

USA and IARU Region 2 ARDF Championships 2019

Your ARDF Coordinator has selected North Carolina as the site of the Nineteenth USA ARDF Championships, which will also be designated as the Tenth ARDF Championships of IARU Region 2. Radio-orienting courses will be set in forests near Raleigh. Competitors will

utilize an excellent recent map provided by Backwoods Orienteering Klub. Co-chairs of the organizers are Joseph Huberman, K5JGH and Ruth Bromer, WB4QZG.

Plans are for a full week of ARDF activities, starting on Sunday, July 28 with practice and training courses in foxhunting in the morning and sprint in the afternoon. An 80-meter practice/training course will be available on Monday, followed by a practice session of a special ARDF event for blind and low-signed individuals. Normal-sighted persons may participate by being blindfolded. On Tuesday morning will be a practice two-meter course. Wednesday will be a day of rest, sightseeing, and equipment check. This will be arrival day for those who do not participate in any practice sessions. A competitor meeting is planned for the evening.

The first championship event, foxoring, will be on Thursday, August 1. Friday begins with the sprint championship, followed by the blind ARDF championships, a model event for equipment testing, and a competitor meeting. The two-meter classic event is on Saturday morning, followed by an awards banquet in the evening with medals for foxoring, sprint and two-meter classic. On Sunday morning is the 80-meter classic competition, followed immediately by awards presentation and departure in the afternoon.

This will be the third USA ARDF Championships to take place in North Carolina. The 2006 championships took place in William B. Umstead State Park near Raleigh-Durham International Airport. The 2013 championships were in Birkhead Wilderness Area of the Uwharrie National Forest, just south of Asheboro.

As always, the USA ARDF Championships are open to anyone, at any ARDF skill level. Medals will be awarded in IARU's six age categories for males and five categories for females. Visiting competitors from other countries are expected, as in previous championships.

Invitations have been issued to the students and coaches of Guangzhou No. 2 High School in China, who participated in the IARU Region 2 ARDF Championships in 2015 and 2017. If a sufficient number of young persons take part in these 2019 championships, awards will be presented in additional IARU categories for youth (M13, M15, W13 and W16).

Latest updates about these championships will be posted at <http://www.homingin.com>. Competitor and visitor registration will begin this spring, at which time I will send a news item for QST and the ARRL Web site. Attendance at USA's ARDF Championships by ARRL section and division leaders is welcomed and encouraged.

New ARDF Coordinator for IARU Region 2

After almost seventeen years of service, Dale Hunt, WB6BYU has stepped down as the ARDF Coordinator for Region 2 of the IARU. Replacing him is Kenneth Harker, WM5R of Austin, Texas, who was appointed by the Region 2 Executive Committee in August 2018.

WM5R has been involved in ARDF since 2002. He has won medals at the USA ARDF Championships numerous times and was on ARDF Team USA to the ARDF World

Championships in 2010, 2014, 2016 and 2018. He and his wife Jennifer, W5JEN organized the USA ARDF Championships in 2008 and 2016.

In addition to promoting the growth of ARDF within North and South America, WM5R will work with the national ARDF coordinators and the ARDF Working Groups of Regions 1 and 3 to refine ARDF rules and to plan international events.

Conclusion

Interest and participation in ARDF activities continues to grow. The encouragement and support of the ARRL Board of Directors for activities of ARDF Team USA and the ARRL ARDF Coordinator is greatly appreciated. Thanks also to ARRL Headquarters, especially ARRL Web and QST staff, for publicizing ARDF activities and events.

I firmly believe that radio-orienteeing is a magnet to our hobby for youth and for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. I welcome efforts by Board members to encourage inclusion of on-foot transmitter hunting activities at local and regional events within their jurisdictions.

More information about ARDF in the USA, including details and photos of local events in the reporting period, can be found at <http://www.homingin.com>.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Moell KØOV
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