ARRL Club Competition
Club Eligibility Changes

Earlier this year, following a challenge that resulted in realignment of several club scores in the 10 Meter Contest, it became clear that the Club Competition rules weren't being enforced as consistently as they should have been. In order to make sure the club results are accurate and fair to all, the ARRL Contest Branch is renewing its effort to help clubs comply with the rules. (See section 8 of the General Rules for All Contests at www.arrl.org/general-rules-for-all-arrl-contests.)   There are three changes covered in this bulletin:

• Online uploading of club rosters,
• Use of six-character grid locators as locations, and
• Deadline for submitting eligibility is now the contest start time

Online Uploading of Rosters

Clubs will now have the ability to upload a club roster via an online web page, just like a contest log. This service is being developed for the ARRL by Bruce Horn, WA7BNM, and Trey Garlough, N5KO. Using this web page, a club secretary can upload the information and it will be time-stamped and stored. (The data format for the roster is provided below.) It will no longer be necessary to mail, email, or fax the club roster to the Contest Branch.

All that's required is for the club secretary or other authorized member to upload a file containing the current club roster, including the club's section or the center of the club's eligibility circle. The web service will also provide a window for copy-and-paste from a text list containing the necessary information if that is more convenient.   This process has worked exceptionally well for submitting contest logs and has been accepted by the contest community as convenient and trouble-free. A group of club secretaries is currently testing the process to be sure it works as expected.

Use of Six-Character Grid Locators

Locations will all be entered and displayed as six-character grid locators, such as FN21aw or DM02ks. It will no longer be necessary to determine latitude and longitude for members or a club circle center. The center of the locators will be used for calculating the member's distance from the club center using a standard algorithm that will also be public. A member may reside and operate anywhere in a six-digit locator that satisfies the distance rule. If the grid locator for a member is not known, "Distance Unavailable" (or words to that effect) will be displayed on the roster. There are many online services that provide a six-character grid locator from an address or latitude and longitude. The maximum circle distances are NOT changing.

Eligibility Deadline

With the online service available, the deadline for submitting a roster is also changing. Previously, clubs had 30 days following the contest to submit their rosters. Putting contests on the same footing as all

other competitions and to eliminate any temptation to pick only high scores or to engage in "category shopping," the eligibility deadline is being changed to the start of the contest, effective with the November CW Sweepstakes - 2100 UTC on 5 Nov 2016 - and will apply to all nine of the ARRL contests with a Club Competition (see General Rule 8.1).

The rosters and club circle center can be changed and uploaded at any time, including repeated uploads, until the contest starts. If an individual member is added or deleted, just change the roster and resubmit it in its entirety. The last roster and circle center to be submitted before the contest's start time will be used for that contest. A club can change its circle for each contest, if desired. All roster versions will be saved, just like contest logs. This is similar to the team registration process for NCJ-sponsored contests that has been in use for some time.

After a roster is submitted, it will be available for inspection online so that everyone can see which stations are claimed as eligible for a club. (Individual contesters can submit their score in support of any club they are eligible to support, of course.)

Discussion

The roster eligibility service will NOT be used to enforce the club rules, only to allow other contesters to view the rosters and to make it easy for the clubs to follow the rules. Challenges can be made through the Contest Branch as they are now. The minimum log totals for each club category will remain the same.

If your club will have difficulty using the online service or meeting the deadline, contact the ARRL Contest Branch Manager, Bart Jahnke, W9JJ, at contests@arrl.org.

We hope that clubs will take this opportunity to review their membership rosters, insure that the current location information is correct, and get ready to compete in the upcoming ARRL contests.

Signature

Club Roster Format:

(In a CSV file, entries are organized by row. In a TSV text file, entries are organized by lines.)

Row 1: official name of club (must match the name of an ARRL Affiliated Club)
Row 2: 6-character grid square of club center (i.e. DM02ks)
Rows 3-n: club roster entries

For rows 3-n:
Column 1: club member's call sign
Column 2: 6-character grid square of member's location (optional - will be flagged as unknown in roster

if no data is supplied)
Columns 3-n: [optional fields for clubs to use in any way they'd like - will be ignored on upload]