# Results, 12th ARRL 10-Meter Contest 

# Start with unexpectedly good propagation. Add a thousand or so eager contest enthusiasts, and toss in a few openings. The result? Some mighty pleasurable operating! 

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The $28-\mathrm{MHz}$ band is well known for its extreme variations. During solar maximums, long-distance propagation is so efficient that a few watts of RF output can provide astounding signal strengths. When the bottom of the solar cycle is approached, 10 meters may go completely dead. These periods are occasionally punctuated by some north-south path openings, usually involving very long skip.

To the uninitiated, the above quote, taken from The ARRL Handbook for the Radio Amateur, makes 10 sound like a boring place to be when the sunspots go away. As I'm sure many 10 -meter enthusiasts will agree, the years surrounding sunspot minimums can also be the most exciting time to work the bandyou never know what you'll hear, or when you'll hear it!

The 12th running of the ARRL 10-Meter Contest, held December 8-9, 1984, wasn't a record breaker. For the majority of the 709 log entrants representing 68 sections and 50 DXCC countries, however, the band was in relatively good shape considering the solar-flux level (76-77). It's interesting to see how the level of solar flux affects participation (See Fig. 1).

The solid line represents the number of entries we received, while the broken line indicates the corresponding solar-flux level. Our graph of solar-flux information begins in 1979, near the peak of Cycle 21. As can be seen from the graph, the level of solar flux directly affects the number of entries we receive.

In 1980, for instance, as the solar flux approached 260, we suffered a slight decrease in participation. Conditions on this weekend were actually too good, with the maximum usable frequency (MUF) approaching 50 MHz . Six-meter operators were treated to worldwide propagation, while conditions on 10 weren't quite as good as the year before.

As solar-flux levels decreased to between 160 and 170 (1981-1982), the MUF approached 28 MHz - 10 meters was at its Cycle 21 peak. Participation reflected this peak, as over 1600 entries were received in each of these years. Where there is a peak, however, there must also be a valley. From 1982 until the present, sunspot activity has been in a downslide. Hence, MUFs have been dropping, resulting in fewer extended openings and less activity on 10 meters.

This shift in conditions has also wreaked havoc with the leader boxes, with only six of 1983's winners represented. K4XS and AA2Z (numbers one and two, respectively) were the only mixedmode W/VE participants to top the 200-k mark,

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Fig. 1 - Correlation between $10-\mathrm{Meter}$ Contest entries and $2800-\mathrm{MHz}$ solar flux. The solid line corresponds to entries, while the dashed line represents solar flux.
with KE5CV and N2RM hot on their tails. TI1C, operated by TI2CF, was the undisputed DX champ, with five times the score of the numbertwo entry of VK2WU.

Fours and fives, with the exception of W9WAQ (number eight), dominated the CW scene. W5XZ managed to edge out K1ZX/4 by just over 6000 points (about $3 \%$ of his total score) for the top CW spot. N4AR, the only repeat top-ten stateside finisher on CW, slipped from a top berth in ' 83 to number five in ' 84. EA6KZ was the only DX station represented in both this year's and last year's CW box. He moved up from number six to number three.

Phone was by far the most popular mode in the 1984 10-Meter Contest. N5AU (WB5VZL, opr.) and KE5FI dominated the competition, scoring over 200,000 points each. KIIG operated the only repeat phone station in this year's standings (as well as the only New England station), K1NG, to a fifth-place finish. LU1BR moved up from number seven in 1983 to number
three in '84. TI1W, operated by TI2KD, headed the $D X$ portion of phone competition.

For the second year in a row, K5LZO placed second in the stateside multioperator category. In 1983, 'LZO and crew were edged out by W5VX. This year, NR5M and team put in an outstanding effort for top spot, with almost 395 k . That score would have placed number three in 1983, when scores were almost double those of this year. LU4US copped top ranking in the DX multioperator category, defeating second-place LU1E by 90 k . The guys from down under, VI3EZ, placed number four, with 1983's number-four station, GW8GT, coming in fifth. N4BP/C6A rounded out the DX multioperator top five.

During the contest, some stations reported generally good conditions, while others, especially those in the upper latitudes, observed no openings at all. North-south paths clearly proved the most reliable, as was evidenced by large scores from southern stations.

## Top Ten-W/VE

| Mixed Mode |  | CW |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Call | Score | Call | Score |
| K4XS | 283,584 | W5XZ | 182,952 |
| AA2Z | 223,680 | K1ZXX4 | 176,648 |
| KE5CV | 186,340 | WC4E | 117,000 |
| N2RM | 173,250 | N4VZ | 89,960 |
| K3ZO | 144,600 | N4AR | 86,436 |
| AA4DV | 116,476 | K4BAI | 64,512 |
| K4VX | 107,260 | KD4U | 59,620 |
| KF3M | 89,100 | WD4AHZ | 56,964 |
| WB7FDQ | 87,898 | W9WAQ | 55,000 |
| K8MN | 87,368 | KJ4X | 53,900 |
|  |  | NO4R | 53,900 |

Top Ten-WIVE

| Phone |  | Multiop |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Call | Score | Call | Score |
| N5AU (WB5VZL) | 257,894 | NR5M | 394,752 |
| KE5FI | 239,616 | K5LZO | 226,780 |
| K3KG | 191,226 | WөAIH/9 | 216,678 |
| W0XK | 146,452 | WT4A | 172,018 |
| K1NG (KI1G) | 117,040 | N2EOC | 141,260 |
| W 14 K | 102,480 | K5RVK | 136,364 |
| N4MM | 99,698 | W6VLD | 130,248 |
| K3ZJ | 98,640 | K8ZE | 128,316 |
| N2BJ | 98,328 | W4WWW | 126,420 |
| NC9C | 94,068 | KA1ZD | 91,988 |

Top Five-DX

| Mixed Mode |  | CW |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Call | Score | Call | Score |
| TI1C (TI2CF) | 454,800 | EA5CF | 26,432 |
| VK2WU | 82,665 | YV70P | 22,796 |
| YU3MA | 34,080 | EA6KZ | 18,496 |
| DL6RAI | 20,520 | F3JL | 13,320 |
| XE1VV | 20,400 | ZS6BCR | 12,772 |
| Phone |  | Multiop |  |
| TIIW (TI2KD) | 176,956 | LU4US | 330,120 |
| NP4CC | 160,208 | LU1E | 239,316 |
| LU1BR | 139,048 | N4BP/C6A | 177,408 |
| LU4DM | 116,604 | VI3EZ | 147,266 |
| KG4DX | 96,792 | GW8GT | 41,490 |

W7FGT, in Arizona, noted all modes of propagation: short path, long path, scatter, transequatorial and backscatter. At some times, Gustav added, antenna direction didn't seem to make much difference.
From Africa, ZS6BCR took advantage of conditions on Friday evening to work numerous W1s and W2s. Chris also reported good shortskip openings from his Pretoria QTH, but no takers.
GW4BLE reported two stateside openings
from his QTH, and YU3MA noted hearing some U.S. stations for a short period, but no JAs. Australians, as well as several stations from the Caribbean, were heard from Yugoslavia.
All this goes to show that even in a "dead" band contest, there is a payoff for those hearty souls who tough it out. Punctuated by openings, 10 meters can hardly be described as a dull place to be. Low expectation enhanced the surprise of DX QSOs. KøSCM reported a fantastic opening on Sunday morning. KA5KWX had good openings to all parts of the U.S., South America and the Pacific, as well as an unusual number of nighttime openings.
Novices were an unusual treat this year. Like an ice-cold drink on a hot summer day, Novice QSOs were welcomed by those who occasionally strolled the Novice bands, seeking to raise their totals by 8 -point bursts. The Novices who provided the refreshing boosts reported few takers in "their" territory. Our thanks to those brave souls for hanging in there. See you in lucky number 13, to be held on December 13-15, 1985.

## SOAPBOX

One of the better signals heard came from a nearby electric fence (K4JHT). Conditions were poor, but surprising how a CQ would bring them out of the woodwork (N4UH). Amazing how a "dead" band comes to life during a contest (W2DW). The propagation was downright weird (KF3M). I had so much fun this year that next year I plan to operate the whole 48 hours. Who needs the F layer? E layer and troposphere worked fine (WA2TBA). My score went up about 1 k from last year when I used a vertical. This year, I used a beam (KV1L). Band conditions were extremely bad this year. I couldn't even hear the ops across town! (KS6Q). Band conditions weren't all that bad considering MUF. Great contest, lots of fun (NC6T/NF6H). Now I know how the "Maytag Repairman"' feels. On Sunday afternoon, a couple of high-speed ops came by, but chose not to slow down from about 30 WPM so I could work them. I guess this isn't a Novice contest, although scoring indicates that it should be (KA5PVB/N). The contest this year was an exercise in being in the right place at the right time! Stations would boom in for 2 or 3 minutes, then fade away. This was a very good test of operator skills and endurance (N5EZA). I worked 185 QSOs in one hour. Who says we need sunspots? (KøSCM). The band was in and out most of the time. I had no time to really operate, as I was babysitting 2 grandkids and a pooch, both days. I enjoyed what time I had (KR9G). 'Tis really stinko when one's 160 test score


Mitch, WB1GQR, took top honors from the rare VT Section.
is better than one's 10 -meter score! (K8MN). I got a new rig two days before the contest. That, plus better propagation, tripled my 1983 score (KA5KWX). I always did prefer to ferret out the weak, scratchy ones rather than work a "bundle of boomers." My receiver is 23 years old and the transmitter is 26 years old. I'm still using the original tube in my final (KøVV). Unscientific propagation report: "Propagation is at its best when Daddy has to babysit." Zeros boycott the contest? Were they part of the sunspot conspiracy? This is my lowest score since 1978 (KA6BIM). I was very pleased to work LU8DQ with just 5-W output and a simple vertical antenna (WA2HSQ). You have to suffer through the bad times on 10 to appreciate the higher activity at the sunspot peak. The conditions this year were reflected in the smaller-sized envelope and smaller postage I used to send in my results (WB2AMU). I really enjoyed my first contest. I picked up 3 new states and 2 new countries. It was unreal how all the signals vanished when Sunday football started on television (KB4KEM). Sunday afternoon, I was faced with an important decision Do I contest or do I ski? Since the skiing conditions were much better than propagation, I shut down the rig and headed off to the mountains. I figured


A look at the guys from Down Under. (From left) VK3s DMU, DXI, FY and ASE, operated VI3EZ to the largest score from Oceania. Not shown in the picture are VK3EW and VK3COF.


Greg, N9CIW, and his "disaster area" finished number two on phone in Illinois.
out my effective radiated power (ERP) for this location in northern VT: rare section- +20 dB ; crummy propagation- -30 dB ; power-line noise- -10 dB ; result - -20 dB . Now I have a good, solid excuse for my low score (WB2JSJ/WB1GQR). The weak-signal work was a lot of fun. I'm looking forward to an increase in sunspot numbers next year (CT2FH). I have been enjoying Amateur Radio for over 4 years, and I hope to enjoy ham life forever (JE7BIZ). I regret that I couldn't make a contact with any DX station (JK1RJQ). I suppose I'm not the only one to complain about the propagation, or am I just spoiled? Anyhow, I don't have to send a dupesheet this time (EA8ZI). The band was crazy this year. I heard about a dozen other Ws, but I guess you had lots of QRM (DL6RAI). I'm 17 years old and this is my first experience ... Great! (EA5EVS). I'm a 52 -year member of ARRL (OZ8T). We had great fun. The band isn't dead yet. It gets absolutely freezing up here on the summit of Mt. Donna Buang at night. We'll be back next year (VI3EZ/p).


WD9GYX used this setup to make over 200 QSOs from the Illinois Section.

## Scores

DX scores are listed by continent and country according to the ARRL DXCC list. U.S. and Canadian scores are listed by call area and ARRL section. Single-operator scores are listed first, followed by multioperator. Each line score lists call sign, score, QSOs, multipliers and entry class (A = Mixed Mode; B = CW Only; C = Phone Only; D = Multioperator).




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