# Results, Third ARRL RTTY Roundup <br> <br> This RTTY contest was great!-KD2BW 

 <br> <br> This RTTY contest was great!-KD2BW}

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0n almost every night of the year, a spin through the frequencies where you might expect to find RTTY will probably net far more packet squawking and AMTOR chirping than Baudot. But when it's contest time, the opposite is obvious-Baudot is everywhere! "This contest offers me pleasure in my favorite hobby,'" said VE2GDZ, "But, where are all these RTTY stations the rest of the year?"
The operator who was once found exclusively on 20-meter RTTY has evolved. He now divides his time and resources between task-oriented modes on HF, VHF and UHF that have only recently come into vogue. If accuracy is more important than throughput, he runs HF AMTOR and packet. On VHF packet he monitors a DX cluster. But on the first weekend in January, when the gun sounds for the RTTY Roundup, he's on Baudot-because that's where the fun is.
In 1989, when the RTTY Roundup was fresh out of the box, only 18 logs showed 400 QSOs or more. In 1991, the number of stations that broke 400 was more than double that. With the exception of high-power, single-op (which held off the challenge by 369 points), the 1991 top scores in high-power DX and in all other stateside categories set all-time records. The demands on equipment and operators has become intense. Let's see what it takes to set the pace.

## A Top Single-Op

"A good contest," commented Ed, W3EKT. "I improved my score from last year and that's all I could ask for. I had fun running into old friends. That's what Amateur Radio is all about." Ed turned in this year's overall top score to win the single-operator, high-power class from W3LPL. With four 200 -foot towers, three 100 -footers and an assortment of gain antennas on each band, it's easy to see why Ed was so loud. 'LPL uses high dipoles and a full-sized quad on 80 (hardwired for Europe).
The station layout poses interesting challenges for the single-op category. Each band is permanently configured with a homebrew 3-1000Z amplifier and a Drake C-line. The only thing common to all operating positions is the amplifiers' high-voltage, which is routed around the room on coax. To change bands, you pack up and move. Ed used a variety of demodulators: ST-6000s, a couple of DT-600s and an old Electrocom
with separate Microlog ACT-1s for each band.

He hand-logged the contest and used K1EA's contest software after the fact for duping and to get presentable hard copy.
"Attention to detail," he said, "is a neces-


Bob, N2FF, reported that his biggest thrill was when V85GA called him for a new country.


Here's the crew of the number-four US multioperator low-power effort at W5VZF: (l-r) Phil, WA4DDE; Jim, W5VZF; and Rich, KB4HB.

| W/VE-Low Power |  | W/VE-High Power |  | DX-Low Power |  | DX-High Power |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Call | Score | Call | Score | Call | Score | Call | Score |
| KE0KB <br> AA5AU | 58,590 53,240 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { W3LPL } \\ & \text { (W3EKT,op) } \end{aligned}$ | 73,359 | 4M5RY <br> (YV5KAN,op) | 50,666 | KP2N <br> 9L1US | 64,848 38,802 |
| VE6ZX | 43,956 | WF1B | 69,387 | EA8AKQ | 35,052 | AL7LB | 34,788 |
| NO1Y | 42,133 | VE7ARS | 66,555 | FF1NZH | 34,470 | AL7BB | 30,360 |
| KC2FD | 40,040 | WF5E | 59,032 | KP4FP | 26,980 | OH2LU | 16,724 |
| N1SW | 39,355 | AA4M/6 | 55,000 | G0ARF | 22,268 | OH2BP | 15,232 |
| NT3B | 35,708 | N6GG | 53,037 | AL7BK | 21,240 | HA5CP | 12,144 |
| W6/G@AZT | 35,340 | AA4TH | 51,069 | PA3DBS | 20,090 | IKOCNA | 8,265 |
| WB4M | 35,259 | WF5T | 43,624 | EA6ZP | 13,224 | SM4RGD | 7,436 |
| W7LHO | 33,540 | K6WZ | 40,670 | VP2EE | 11,286 | LU9DBK | 6,027 |
|  |  | NO2T | 36,855 | HL9RY | 8,925 |  |  |

Multioperator High Scores

| W/VE-Low | Power |
| :--- | ---: |
| Call | Score |
| WB7AVD | 59,660 |
| NJ@M | 54,426 |
| KB9ATR | 25,122 |
| W5VZF | 19,241 |
| KB5ILS | 14,904 |

DX-High Power

| DX—High Power |  |
| :--- | ---: |
| Call | Score |
| JJ3YBB | 36,036 |
| UZ9CWA | 26,690 |
| NL7HP | 24,367 |

sity. If you have to twist your neck to see the screen, by the end of the contest it will be killing you." To improve his rate, he shortened the exchange info. He said that the US stations quickly got used to one-time exchanges, but DX and the Europeans in particular, would ask for repeats if the exchange got too short. Sending the info twice seemed to work.

## Low Power is No Problem

Tom, KE0KB, is batting two-out-of-three! This year marks consecutive wins and a class record for him in the single-op, low-power category. Although Tom recently moved to Connecticut, his layout in Minneapolis for the 1991 contest included a Kenwood TS-950 transceiver driving a 4-element tribander with a G5RV for the low bands. He used an AEA PK-232 controller for transmit and a HAL ST-6000 feeding a Telereader and a Tono 5000 on receive.

He explained that a nearby neighbor with VCR trouble had a lot to do with his original decision to go low power, but now he doesn't think he'd ever switch. "There are differences in low-power operation," he said. "Holding a frequency is almost impossible. You have to get used to being pushed around." He said 15 meters was his most productive band.
Tom is also big on ARIES-I software, which allows him to send and log with a single program. He claimed that using a mouse to control the software prevented fatigue during the contest. He was adamant about logging software, 'If I had to log by hand, I wouldn't contest!"

## Multiop Success

In the low-power, multioperator class, Jim, WB7AVD, also set a record. He's an experienced contest operator from several multiop efforts, but this was his first attempt from his home in Spokane (Washington). The three-operator effort included Betsy, WV7Y; and Jay, WS7I (Jay won high-power-single
last year). Jim ran a tribander at 60 feet with an inverted-trap-V on 80 and 40 meters off the same tower. He ran a Ten-Tec Omni transceiver into a Heathkit SB-1000 amp which he throttled back to 150 watts (on a Bird wattmeter).

The RTTY was an ST-6000 with Hal DSRTTY software on one computer for receive while he ran a PK-232 controller with Scotchlog on transmit from a second keyboard.

Jim said that it was completely different from high-power operation. "You always avoid the hottest band. When the bands get crowded, it's time to QSY, starting early on 40 and coming back to 10 meters after most stations have gone to 15 . We could hardly work 20 meters at all."
He said that off-duty operators spent as much time at home feeding the contest station multipliers as they did operating. To improve throughput, spotting was done on a voice frequency, independent from the DX-spotting cluster (which was also monitored).
"For a multiop effort, extra spotting is essential," he said. "Since most of the time you're operating hunt-and-pounce anyway, you can't afford to miss multipliers."

## Multiop Powerhouse

WA7EGA (K7DSR, K7GS, NQ7M, W7YEM and WB7RBJ) again managed to avoid meltdown long enough to set a record in the high-power-multi class. At EGA, a pair of 100 -foot towers support Christmas trees for 10-40 and double-extended Zepps for 80 meters. There are two ICOM IC-751 transceivers, one driving a Ten-Tec Titan on 10, 20 and 80 , and the other feeding a Henry 2 K amplifier on 15 and 40 meters. For RTTY, he runs a set of PK-232s for transmit with Scotchlog software. A Dovetron and an ST-8000 feed separate computers, using HAL DS-RTTY for receive.

By separating the receive copy from trans-
mit, there is always a full screen (plus back scrolling) while the logging software controls all transmit buffers. The operator never runs a "live" keyboard. People who type are either too slow or they send too much. In a fastpaced contest like the Roundup, the winning margin can be as narrow as one QSO per hour. The group's best rate was on 20 meters from $0100-0200 \mathrm{Z}$, with more than 80 QSOs per hour. Even the best operator cannot maintain that rate if he has to dupe, log, tune and type all the exchanges manually.
It's hard to convince an operator running 65 QSOs per hour to shut down and QSY to an already worked-out band for a multiplier, especially when he knows he'll be stuck there for 10 minutes. Do it anyway! If it's new DX, or a new state/province any time after 2000Z Saturday, the math always ends up in favor of the multiplier.
A good operator uses both VFOs. Most stations send your call sign at least twice and their own call sign three times. The other $10 \%$ slap you with a call sign the instant you let up your carrier. Send a six-second CQ on VFO A, and if you don't have a call before you can hit the switch, select VFO B and tune in a QSO elsewhere on the band. Don't take more than five seconds before switching back to the first VFO to see if anyone answered the CQ. Although you may be a practicing schizophrenic by the end of the contest, calling CQ on one VFO and using the other to systematically move across the band will keep you from missing multipliers without seriously affecting your rate. It will also give you a yardstick to assess band activity. If your rate is dropping and nobody else seems to be doing any new business, it's time to QSY. If you hear a W4 calling a ZL, rotate the beam.

## Plan Your Strategy

Last year, Europe and the South Pacific were still open after 0100 Z (Saturday night). Quitting too early (just because the East Coast

| Single-Operator Division Leaders |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Division | Low Power Call | Score | High Power Call | Score |
| Atlantic | Nт3B | 35,708 | W3LPL (WЗEKT,op) | 73,359 |
| Central | W9KDX | 32,300 | NaITX | 26,860 |
| Dakota | KEOKB | 58,590 | W9RXJ | 9,548 |
| Delta | AASAU | 53,240 | WA5VBE | 2,660 |
| Great Lakes | WB8YJF | 31,132 | wвмак | 35,506 |
| Hudson | KC2FD | 40,040 | NO2T |  |
| Midwest | KFOLZ | 22,914 | K6WZ | 40,670 |
| Now England | NOTY | 42,133 | WF1B | 69,387 |
| Northwestern | KATT | 27,744 |  |  |
| Pacific | W6/geazt | 35,340 | N6GG | 53,037 |
| Rocky Mountain | W7LHO | 33,540 | WFST | 43,624 |
| Roanoke | WB4M | 35,259 | WD4JBL | 3,900 |
| Southeastern | N4LH | 29,070 | ${ }^{\text {AAATH }}$ | 51,069 |
| Southwestern | WD71 | 19,980 | AA4M/6 | 55,000 |
| West Gulf | NSNUG | 5,676 | WF5E | 59,032 |
| Canada | VE6ZX | 43,956 | ve7ars | 66,555 |

Single-Operator Continental Leaders

| Continent | Low Power Call | Score | High Power Call | Score |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Africa | Eabako | 35,052 | 9L1US | 38,802 |
| Asia | HL9RY | 8,925 | 4Z80TA (4X6UO,op) | 5,014 |
| Europe | FF1NZH | 34,470 | OH2LU | 16,724 |
| North America | KP4FP | 26,980 | KP2N | 64,848 |
| Oceania | AH61X | 4,472 | AH6JF | 4,961 |
| South America | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 4M5RY } \\ & \text { (VV5KAJ,op) } \end{aligned}$ | 50,666 | LU9DBK | 6,027 |



Bob, GØARF, had a great time and managed to beat his previous year's score, despite gale-force winds and two power outages.
has gone to bed and the rate is poor) can cost you five or six easy multipliers. I make up the time by starting later on Sunday morning.
Be sure everything is configured exactly as it will be during the contest and give it a trial before zero-hour. If you haven't checked, it probably won't work. This is especially true with software and all devices that are software controlled.
The number of logs submitted has remained constant-around the 300 markbut casual participation by those who join in for an hour or two seems to be way up. The exchange is easy and there's no number (stateside) to mark the occasional operator as a new guy in the contest.

## New Players in Each Year's Roundup

"This was my first RTTY contest, very challenging," said KW3U, "I learned from it; my old C-64 did well." KA1BVM was also new, "My first RTTY Roundup. Lots of fun! I worked 46 states on 40 meters with a fullwave loop." NQ7C missed a state: "This is my first RTTY test," he wrote. "I'm already looking forward to next year's test, but where was Nevada?"

It looks like WA8ZNC is going to be multiop next year. He says, "This was my stepdaughter's first contest. She received her ticket, KB5OHG, less than a month ago. At age 10 , she took to contesting well. I guess I'll have to share the rig in future contests." And KB5OHG warned, "This was my first contest and I did real well, so watch out, world!"
There were single-op entries that probably should have counted for multiops. "Not much of an effort this year because I had to play Mr Mom this weekend," complained ND2K. "One thing nice about RTTY is that three screaming kids in the shack don't affect RTTY copy!" Another unintentional multi was KM4IG. "This year's contest was enjoyable, even with a contest buster (an eight-week-old baby boy)," he said. "This is the second RTTY Roundup I've participated in. Forty meters came alive like last year and it's great to make the number of QSOs on 40 that I did."

N5NA also had an extra challenge. "First time in an RTTY contest," he explained. "Lots of fun, but have you ever tried contesting with a two-year-old in the room who wants to play radio, too?"
DX participation was down from last year. This is not surprising. Like the Sweepstakes, the Roundup builds a heavy curtain of signals as US stations work each other with their beams pointed inward. It's a tough nut from a DX standpoint. HL9RY admitted, 'Great contest, but I sure goofed on this one. I ran low power and couldn't get over the stateside QRM. Even the weather wouldn't cooperate. Freezing rain had the antenna frozen due north. Sure didn't do as well as last year from Louisiana."

WF1B was delighted. "The greatest moment of contest." he wrote, "was when HL9RY called me near the end of the contest for a much-needed multiplier. It's a great contest and gets better every year!"

Even SM4RGD was hooked. "Thanks for a nice contest. This was my first ARRL
contest and I'm sure it's not the last one. The conditions were very good on 28 MHz . Thanks to all stations."

## High Versus Low Power

Although it takes more patience and better operating skills to compete in the low-power, 150 -watt class, it's still the most popular category, running about $3: 1$ over QRO entries. AB4GR wrote, "Another excellent contest. It's amazing what you can do with 50 watts and an inverted-V antenna," and from AE0Q, "Most fun I've ever had in a contest, even with indoor dipoles!"

N9ITX may have regretted his decision to run high power. "Despite computer RFI problems, TVI problems on 15 meters, and spending two hours fixing the antenna tuner," he wrote, "I still had a blast in the contest!"

AH6IX proved that low power was no guarantee either. "Boy did the RF gremlins catch me! I had an RF-feedback problem for the first several hours and made few contacts. I finally tracked it down to a 2 -meter amplifier connected to a 2 -meter radio (both off), which was then connected to the same TNC as the HF rig. I had a lot of fun, this is turning into one of my favorite contests!"
Is there a doctor in the house? 1990's top "peanut whistle," AA5AU, says, "The lack of LA stations made me a popular multiplier, catapulting me over the $600-$ QSO mark. But working two computers and fretting over a slowly dying transmitter is enough to send anyone over the edge. The rig can be fixed, but my brain will never be the same. Do we have to do it again next year? You bet!"

NJ8M wrote, "I just fired up on RTTY for the first time on Friday. I had a ball, but I still enjoy CW. Now I know what digital modes really mean. My fingers are raw from typing." WB8SVK also ran out of fingers. "Next year," he wrote, 'I'll have the PTT line fixed and I plan to run RTTY and packet. Thanks for a great time! I'll send the bill from the orthopedic surgeon!'"

Despite a high technical difficulty factor, the word that best describes the Roundup is fun! N2HOS dubbed it "a heck of a good contest!"

I think everyone agrees with N2KAD: 'This was truly a great experience. I can't wait until next year." See you then.

## 10-Meter Contest Score Correction KR2Q's score was inadvertently omitted from the 1990 ARRL 10-M Contest Results in July 1991 QST. Doug operated from his NNJ QTH in the CWonly QRP class and had the top W/VE score in that category, with 672 QSOs and 102 multipliers-275,400 pointsin 32 hours of operation.

## SOAPBOX

This was my second year in the Roundup. This was the best contest I've ever entered. RTTY ops are the best! (K9RRB). It was fun, but I missed the whole idea on multipliers. T'll get them next year. (WA8MEM). Great contest! I wish conditions could have been better on 10 meters. Each year I keep getting better, but how I hate the paperwork. Thank you until next year! (NT3B). Great contest. I was glad to hear more DX stations this year. It was fun working DX on 40 meters and the West Coast on

80 meters (WB4M). Thanks for great contest. Achieved my best QSO/hr rate ever for a RTTY contest. I'll definitely be back next year for more fun (VE6KRR). This was a good contest for someone looking for WAS RTTY. Most of the states were there, including Hawaii. I had fun again this year! (WA3Q). Good contest, but I need computer software that dupes and talks to the TNC (VE7SSS). Good to see more KH6s and KL7s in this contest and the Technicians' activity above 28,100 (W8PBX). Good contest. After 10 years of 160 contesting, I thought I knew something! At least we have a year to prepare for the Fourth RTTY Roundup. Most dupe-free contest ever. Thanks (WM9M). The RTTY subbands are known as the gentlemen's frequencies. In the heat of the contest, all lived up to this fine reputation (WA8FLF). Great fun! It was a pleasure to give out Vermont as a new multiplier for so many. See you next year! (K1HKI). I promise that next year I'll be rested before the weekend and my antennas will be up in time for the contest (VE2OWL). I didn't hear much DX, and packet was scarce. It was a fun contest (WAøQIT). I thoroughly enjoyed it! I accomplished my goals of becoming a better RTTY operator, and picked up 25 new states and a couple of DX countries! All the ops I heard were friendly and helpful. My wife, a nonham, even said she liked this contest-I wasn't so noisy. See you next year! (KI5GX). This was a most enjoyable contest and appeared to have much more participation than last year's contest. Though propagation to Europe and Alaska was a bit lacking this year, the added participation made up for the lack of "over-the-pole"' multipliers. I'll be looking forward to next year's roundup with great expectations (AL7BB). Had more fun this year. It's the funniest thing on the bands for RTTY enthusiast. See you next year! (WA3UXZ). Very enjoyable contest. My son, KBSILT, and I had fun with the minipileups. Does anyone operate RTTY in Utah or Montana? The RTTY Roundup is now a legitimate excuse for being locked in the shack for a weekend (KBSILS).


Roger, NQ6C, home-brewed his RTTY software to allow online logging and duping.


Don, AA5AU, remarked that the lack of Louisiana stations helped him catapult over the 600-QSO level.

Scores
Scores are listed by continents, DXCC countries and ARRLCRRL Sections. DX stations are listed first, then the US and Canada. Within each country or Section single-operator scores are listed first and then multioperator scores. Each line score lists call sign, final score, number of QSOs, number of multipliers, hours operated and power ( $A=$ less than 150 W output; $B=$ more than 150 W output)


