

Lower Columbia Amateur Radio Association

Notes of the Activity Meeting of Feb 11th, 2015.

Digital Night

At about 6:35pm Randy, NU7D, sent some morse code for us to practice on.

The meeting started at about 7:00pm. Randy introduced Mike Ritz, W7VO, he is presently the president of the Willamette DX Club. Mike does a slide show at SeaPac that he brought to show us called "How to Get Started in Contesting and Maximize Your Score". I asked for a copy of it and it should be on the disk, CRDX 2015 Radio sport for Beginners.

Mike talked about the follow things in doing contest.

Types of radio sports: real time competition, do better than last year, improve on CW and phone.

Why contest: increase skills, better in emergency traffic handling, a quick path to awards- WAS, WAC, DXCC, a good reason to have a party.

Four types of contesting operators: non contester, casual contester, active contester, committed contester.

What do I need for equipment: minimum, a basic ham station; more active: transceiver, PC, internet connection, voice and CW memory keyer, headphones, and a foot switch; max the sky is the limit.

Types of contest: Mode- CW, RTTY, phone, digital, geography, power level (QRP), Frequency- HF, VHF, club competitions- 10-10, straight key, Fist, ARRL Field Day. To check a contesting list go to WA7BNM.com.

Types of operating: single op, single band, single op all bands, single op two radios, multi op one radio, multi op two radios.

Something for everyone.

Non assisted – not using technology to provide call signs and frequency information, can use DX clusters.

Contesting Scoring

Most contest score by using the (number of contacts) times (number of multipliers) times (number of bands). Logging: manually by using paper , the old way; by a program that copies call, name, and freq, location, calculates the score. When the contest is over mail in your log it helps verify other contesters. Errors in the log will cost you points.

Logging programs include: N1MM (freeware), Trlog, Writelog. They do freq, call, band location, scoring, and check for duplications.

Contesting operator techniques:

Search and pounce is you tune to them, is best for beginners. When using USB's start at the low freq end of the band and go up the signal will be better to receive. When using the LSB's start at the high freq end of the band and tune down. Don't waste a lot of time on one station, try again later.

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Using Propagation Charts:

Use the gray line map, on the web or at ARRL. For late night and early morning use 40 mtr – 80 mtr. Late in the day use the upper bands 15 mtr – 10 mtr. 20 mtr is good most of the day. Also check the solar number index, SFI.

Being a good operator:

Know your rules, follow your license class frequency, listen before sending, watch for special freq, always give a RST of 59 – logging programs are already set to record it, be polite, listen carefully for cut numbers on CW, know your band edges, always send your log in to the organizers.

Optimize your results:

Work more contests, improve your license – tech to gen to extra, improve your station – radio, antenna, station set up, check contesting band conditions a week ahead.

Meeting ended at 8:42pm.

Attendance: 14
Respectfully submitted by:
Rick Ouzts, WA7NWN, Secretary.