

2014 ARRL 10 Meter Contest Results

New categories, club competition, stealth operating, and more show that there's no one "right way" to enjoy this contest.

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During the 2014 ARRL 10 Meter Contest over the December 13 – 14 weekend, more than 11,000 operators worldwide got on the air, and a record 5488 operators submitted their logs. With a final estimate of 2.67 million QSOs being made during the contest, spread evenly over the 48-hour operating period, this means 15 QSOs were being made every second, or over 55,000 QSOs per hour. That's a big party!

Fun With Family and Friends

Bruce, AA5B, got a chance during the contest to spend some quality time with his 7-year-old grandson, Keenan. Bruce let Keenan rotate the antenna when he needed to beam in a new direction. Keenan, who was visiting from his home in the Ivory Coast (TU), got really excited when Bruce worked a South African station and pointed on the map to where the station was located. Since Keenan knew how far away his home in TU was, he was amazed that his grandpa could talk to someone in that neighborhood of the world.

Bill, K2PO, took the opportunity during contest weekend to gather a bunch of friends and have an actual party, otherwise known as a multioperator activation. Bill and friends AF8Z, K7CIE, KD7VOK, KU1CW, W6ABM, W7TVC, W8NF, WN6W, and WS7L had a great time. Though Dave, AF8Z, related that they struggled with "...the typical Field Day problem wherein a tent fills with nominally deaf people, socializing in elevated voices, while I try to concentrate on operating..." In the end they persevered, managed to make almost 1400 QSOs, and placed 5th in the US in the Multioperator, Low Power category.

Longtime regular contester Don, K6ZO, used the 10 Meter Contest as an opportunity to introduce a new operator to the enjoyment of contesting. His pupil was Christine, KC3CIF, who earned her ticket earlier in 2014. Don's pre-contest training consisted of showing Christine how to use *NIMM Logger* software, how to listen for call signs, how to apply the DX Code of Conduct, and how to bust a



Figure 1 — Bruce, AA5B, with grandson Keenan. [Bruce Draper, AA5B, photo]

pileup. On contest day, Christine sat down at the microphone and quickly made her first QSO with a station in France. From there, nothing was holding her back, and off and running she went. Since Christine was operating at the W3HAC station in Washington, DC, a sought-after multiplier, she quickly drew attention. The 10 Meter Contest is a perfect event for first-time contesters: a wide band, plenty of activity, loud and clear signals. You can't help but have fun.

Small Signal? No Problem!

One of the great things about the ARRL 10 Meter Contest is that just about any HF capable operator can have fun getting on the air. Amazing results have been had with anything that can radiate RF. Let's take a look at some notable accomplishments.

Fred, NA2U, retired to sunny Arizona several

years ago and found himself constrained by that bane of many Amateur Radio operators — CC&Rs (Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions) and HOAs (Homeowners Associations). Continuing the tradition of inventiveness in our hobby, after some trial and error, Fred settled on an antenna configuration consisting of a ground-mounted screwdriver antenna with radials and a multiband dipole at a height of 58 inches. Yes, inches. Not feet! Amazingly, Fred made 761 QSOs in 16 hours on the air. These QSOs were not all easy state-side stations either. A selection of DX multipliers in Fred's log includes all six continents: ZL, EA8, S5, DL, EA, HK, HI, JA, BY, and VR.

John, N6HI, has always loved the challenge of being a QRP-only operator. Chasing DX and contesting with a maximum of 5 W is fun for him. Like Fred, NA2U, John also lives in a "No Antennas" QTH. If QRP operating isn't a big enough challenge, think of doing it without an antenna. Well, of course you need some sort of antenna. A couple of options are possible: The indoor antenna and the invisible outdoor antenna. John went with the second option. As he described,

I tied a small rock to the end of a 20-foot hunk of insulated wire, and threw it into a tree outside my window. On the indoor end of the wire, I attached a banana plug, and plugged that into the center conductor of the SO-239 antenna output of my tuner.

With this setup, John managed to make 52 QSOs, including a couple of Europeans — which was not so easy from the West Coast.

New Unlimited Categories

For the competition-oriented operators, the major change in contest rules for 2014 was the addition of Unlimited categories. No longer would single operators using spotting assistance or automated multi-channel decoders, aka *CW Skimmer* software by VE3NEA, have to enter in the Multioperator category. This change has been requested for years. The

Number of Stations Achieving Worked All States

Continent	2014	2013
Africa	0	2
Asia	0	1
Europe	0	0
North America	148	92
Oceania	10	9
South America	25	31
Total	183	135

ARRL listened and created a full set of Single Operator Unlimited categories. Almost one-third of the entrants participated in the new Unlimited categories. For the first year of a new scheme, it was very successful.

Update on Mexico

Another recent rule change occurred in 2010 when the 32 Mexican (XE) states were added to the multiplier list. Since then, XE contest activity has grown nicely, with a total of 38 XE logs submitted in 2014 containing 21,000 QSOs — up from 33 logs in 2013 and 30 in 2012. With competitors worldwide chasing down these multipliers, XE operators have realized they will be very popular when they get on the air. As Luis, XE2B, related after the contest: “I managed to work DXCC (106 countries) plus all stateside and just missed one VE province (NU).” He has to be one of the very few stations that managed both DXCC and WAS over the weekend. Well done, Luis! As he also described, “There were several instances where I was asked to repeat the exchange twice or more, because they were asking for a number and seemed confused when I was sending my state abbreviation.” As a reminder for everyone, XE stations give a three-letter state abbreviation for their exchange. A list of the abbreviations can be found on the ARRL website, in the rules for the 10 Meter Contest.

Affiliated Club Competition

Club competition continues to be a popular aspect of this contest. Operators get a chance to be part of a team while operating from their home station. It can be quite motivating to get on the air to make some points for your club or to compete for honors against fellow club members. Many operators mention in their soapbox comments something similar to, “Wanted to get on the air to make some points for our club.” A total of 1193 operators submitted logs that were also credited towards club competition. This means that 47% of the W/VE operators were part of one of the 78 different clubs that participated. Way to go, club organizers!

Pass the Popcorn!

This year, I developed some new software tools to analyze the logs and created something new — animated movies that portray how propagation across the US plays out across the whole contest weekend. As a metric for propagation I used, “What is the average QSO rate of stations in each state with a given target area during a certain period?” The raw data to build these views was extracted from submitted logs and converted to a map

Affiliated Club Competition		
Unlimited	Entries	Score
Potomac Valley Radio Club	119	32,894,468
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	69	25,906,636
Florida Contest Group	69	22,266,758
Minnesota Wireless Assn	82	13,753,212
Northern California Contest Club	59	12,311,710
Society of Midwest Contesters	63	9,528,144
Medium		
Frankford Radio Club	40	16,651,752
Arizona Outlaws Contest Club	47	14,331,432
Contest Club Ontario	39	11,786,532
Southern California Contest Club	27	9,254,746
DFW Contest Group	31	9,191,668
Georgia Contest Group	15	6,428,628
Mad River Radio Club	14	6,241,686
ORCA DX And Contest Club	12	5,575,504
Central Texas DX and Contest Club	10	5,301,270
Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado	15	5,183,018
Carolina DX Association	19	5,114,306
Maritime Contest Club	10	4,860,048
Alabama Contest Group	18	4,771,892
Louisiana Contest Club	12	4,594,208
Western Washington DX Club	18	4,578,236
Mother Lode DX/Contest Club	18	4,274,432
Hudson Valley Contesters and DXers	13	3,852,028
Tennessee Contest Group	25	3,848,906
Contest Group Du Quebec	12	3,226,372
Willamette Valley DX Club	16	2,684,648
Utah DX Association	12	2,629,802
South East Contest Club	12	2,547,606
Order of Boiled Owls of New York	9	2,132,214
Hampden County Radio Assn	19	1,885,068
Saskatchewan Contest Club	5	1,700,706
North Texas Contest Club	4	1,608,928
Mississippi Valley DX/Contest Club	4	1,497,546
Texas DX Society	3	1,336,976
Rochester (NY) DX Assn	10	1,158,946
North Coast Contesters	6	1,078,062
Kentucky Contest Group	6	1,046,738
CTRI Contest Group	5	486,242
Six Meter Club of Chicago	6	220,100
Swamp Fox Contest Group	7	195,408
Badger Contesters	3	161,336
Local		
Central Virginia Contest Club	9	5,538,040
Bozonga DX and Contest Club	3	3,040,388
Radiosport Manitoba	5	2,349,080
Redwood Empire DX Assn	5	1,790,274
Kansas City Contest Club	8	1,586,512
Lincoln ARC	9	1,497,914
Bristol (TN) ARC	10	1,189,296
599 DX Association	9	1,167,016
Hilltop Transmitting Assn	4	1,127,490
Northeast Maryland Amateur Radio Contest Society	9	1,113,418
Spokane DX Association	8	1,059,168
Sussex County ARC	10	1,008,678
Delara Contest Team	5	885,248
Meriden ARC	5	755,410
Niagara Frontier Radiosport	7	737,448
North Carolina DX and Contest Club	5	533,416
Murgas ARC	4	499,752
Midland ARC	4	478,588
Metro DX Club	4	411,278
Contoocook Valley Radio Club	6	401,398
West Park Radiops	6	382,554
Portage County Amateur Radio Service	4	345,368
Brazos Valley ARC	5	315,710
Granite State ARA	7	258,204
Athens County ARA	5	204,814
Columbia-Montour ARC	3	201,168
Sterling Park ARC	4	163,216
West Allis RAC	6	161,282
South Jersey DX Assn	3	158,268
North Fulton ARL	6	135,566
Skyview Radio Society	6	104,242
Bergen ARA	7	93,782
Pottstown Area ARC	6	90,258
Ventura County Amateur Radio Society	3	84,722
Rappahannock Valley Amateur Radio Club	4	71,474
Peterborough Amateur Radio Club	3	70,280
Wireless Association of South Hills	3	48,184

— formally called Choropleth maps. One map was created for each 30-minute period during the contest and then assembled into animated 2-minute movies that can be viewed at [Vimeo.com \(https://vimeo.com/124625915 through 124625918\)](https://vimeo.com/124625915).

Some of these movies start out kind of slow. For example, the European movie does not show anything for a while because the first QSOs between the US and Europe don't happen until many hours into the contest. Have patience and allow each movie to play through.

Evening Activity in the US

One thing I do in preparing to write each year's article is read the soapbox comments everyone wrote. I came across many references to the quality of the evening opening in the US on Saturday night versus Friday night. Some typical comments were:

The E-skip finally got hot around 0230 [Saturday night], but most of the casual ops had long since QRTed. — *Bill, K4XS*

Best part of the contest was on Saturday night, when 10 turned into 6 meters for a while. — *Jamie, NS3T*

Big Es late Saturday night but hardly anyone around to work it! — *W9XG (operator Bob, K2DRH)*

Starting about 0300 UTC on Sunday (Saturday night in the US), operators started to make many more QSOs than they did on the first night. The peak of the opening appears to be the 30 minutes starting at 0400 UTC, when over 1500 QSOs were logged — a rate of almost one per second. The band remained open through the rest of the night until the QSO rate dropped to zero around 0700 UTC or 2 AM local time on the East Coast.

New World Records

2014 may be the last time for several years in which any new world records are achieved during this sunspot cycle. If so, 2014 certainly will have left its mark in the record book. Let's take a look at what happened. (All world records and W/VE/XE records can be found online at www.arrl.org/contest-records) Congratulations to all the new record holders. You have set the bar high.

Next, congratulations as well to the nine stations establishing world records in the new Single Operator Unlimited categories. Seven are stations in North or South America, with the remaining two from Europe. Note that in all cases the Unlimited category record scores

