



News and Events — March 2024

HOW ABOUT THESE CONDITIONS?!

The ARRL DX SSB contest recently ended, and what a month it has been! Conditions were very good for both modes of the ARRL DX contests. Seasoned DX contesters will recall that the best conditions are not always at the very peak of the sunspot cycle, but sometimes are even better on the way up or way down from the peak. One reason is that there are fewer solar disturbances further from the peak, resulting in better overall conditions on all six HF contesting bands. While 160 meters was not especially great for the SSB DX contest, 10 meters more than made up for it. Stations were lined up all the way beyond 29 MHz both days. Enjoy these conditions while you can; they won't last forever.

TCG BRUNCH @ K4RO APRIL 20

Mark your calendars for a TCG brunch gathering at K4RO on Saturday April 20. Please RSVP directly to K4RO so that we may determine an accurate head count. Stay tuned for an email answering the question "what can we bring?" Similar to last year, we will send a request, while keeping track to avoid dupes. Stay tuned to the TCG reflector for details. Come enjoy some unique contest camaraderie with your fellow TCG members.

TCG OPERATES AT K3LR



WF7T, AD4EB, and K4RO operating at K3LR ARRL DX CW 2024



The 20 meter 6/6/6/6 run stack at K3LR. AD4EB shares some recollections from his adventures in West Middlesex, PA below.

The 2024 ARRL DX CW weekend is one that I will never forget. I was offered the unique opportunity to operate at the K3LR super station in western PA, which I did not hesitate to jump on. The TCG was well represented with Kirk K4RO and Brad WF7T, who are regulars at K3LR, and me the TNG (the new guy).

It is difficult to convey in words the magnitude and quality of the station. Tim K3LR has built a world class station with 13 towers and 11 operating positions. All of the equipment and construction is top notch and the best of the best. The accompanying photos may give you some idea. The tower in the photo is over 240 ft high and supports the 20m stack of 6L/6L/6L/6L that Kirk and I used. As you can

see, Tim's ham shack is just simply extraordinary. Operating at this station is a dream. It seemed like everyone could hear us, and we could hear everyone.

The band conditions were some of the best I have ever witnessed, and the team took full advantage, setting a new world record in the Multi-Multi category. The best part of the weekend was the camaraderie. The entire team made this TNG feel very welcomed.

K4RO would like to add...

This was a banner year at K3LR. Not only were there three TCG members on the K3LR team, but we managed to beat the K1LZ Maine "Death Star" station team *and* set a new record in the process! This was no small feat, and your TCG members were a crucial part of that effort. Operating at K3LR requires a unique skill set, plus a *lot* of patience and dedication to team work. AD4EB had never done in-band operation before, and he did remarkably well at it. Knowing that Jim was a highly-skilled SO2R operator, I knew that he would quickly understand the QSO interleaving concept. In no time at all, Jim was operating like an old M/M pro. Brad ground out every available 80 meter CW QSO with K3UA, and we were thrilled to see them cross the 1000 QSO barrier. The post-contest team dinner was especially fine, with Tim's leadership and hospitality shining bright like the beacons on his towers.

TCG ARRL DX CONTEST SCORES

The ARRL DX Contests did NOT disappoint this year! The bands were *hot*. Great conditions bring up activity to unprecedented levels. Nothing beats ten meters being wide open for DX contacts. Once folks turn on the radio and have a blast on ten meters, there's a natural tendency to check out the other bands. Great activity begets more activity, and when conditions are great on all bands, that's when DX contest records are set. The 2024 ARRL DX Contests featured nearly ideal "Goldilocks" conditions on all bands. A quick look at 380scores.com shows some remarkable scores generated by TCG on both modes. There were some great tales to go with these scores as well on the TCG email reflector.

ARRL DX CW 2024 TCG Scores

M/S LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
W9SN		x	4109	525	48	6,463,800	TCG

SOAB HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
KØEJ	SO2R		4273	433	42	5,550,627	TCG
AC4G			867	309	20	803,709	TCG
N9CB			401	163	9.5	196,089	TCG
W4UT			402	158	10	190,074	TCG
W6UB			324	160	12.2	155,520	TCG
K3JWI			326	146	07:18	142,350	TCG

SOAB Limited-Ant HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
N9CB			401	163	9.5	196,089	TCG
W4UT			402	158	10	190,074	TCG

SOAB LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
K1GU			1622	339	~26	1,647,540	TCG
K4DXV			120	102	5.0	36,720	TCG
K4KO			69	46	1.5	9,522	TCG

SOSB15 LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
K4AMC			472	78	9:40	110,448	TCG

SOUAB HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
W4NZ			1507	424	32	1,915,632	TCG
K3IE	SO2R		1363	424	13	1,733,736	TCG
N8UM			1020	226	8	691,560	TCG
W3TB			822	272	14:24	670,752	TCG
KEØL			419	408	12	512,856	TCG
NS4X			651	233	8	455,049	TCG
AA4NU			380	191	8:44	217,167	TCG
K3FH			341	206	9	210,738	TCG
AF4T			195	124	4.82	72,540	TCG

SOUAB Limited-Ant HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
KEØL			419	408	12	512,856	TCG
AA4NU			380	191	8:44	217,167	TCG
K3FH			341	206	9	210,738	TCG
AF4T			195	124	4.82	72,540	TCG

SOUAB LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
W4CMG			662	232	21	460,752	TCG
WM4Q			354	272	10:56	287,232	TCG
WD4CFN			165	123		60,885	TCG

SOUAB Limited-Ant LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
WM4Q			354	272	10:56	287,232	TCG

SOUSB10 LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
WF7T			994	106		316,092	

ARRL DX SSB 2024 TCG Scores

SOAB HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
KØEJ			2065	334	22	2,069,130	TCG
K4EA		x	418	402		504,108	TCG
K3JWI			561	1683	16:14	400,554	TCG
AC6ZM			188	86	2:45	48,504	TCG
KA4OTB			93	55	4	15,345	TCG
AF4T			52	36	2.42	5,616	TCG
W4UT			20	14	00:30	840	TCG

SOAB Limited-Ant HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
AF4T			52	36	2.42	5,616	TCG
W4UT			20	14	00:30	840	TCG

SOAB LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
AC4G			807	278	20.75	673,038	TCG
WA4JA			365	181	14	197,652	TCG
WN8Y			206	618	6	69,834	TCG

SOAB Limited-Ant LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
WA4JA			365	181	14	197,652	TCG

SOSB10 HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
N4ZZ			504	58	04:23	87,696	TCG

SOUAB HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
AD4EB	SO2R		2856	449	37	3,874,032	TCG
K4RO	SO2R		2527	437	24:46	3,299,787	TCG
WV4P		x	1832	467	24	2,563,830	TCG
K3IE			2014	416	27	2,513,472	TCG
NS4X			526	202	7	318,756	TCG
AA4NU	SO2R		101	60	2:26	18,180	TCG
K3FH			26	23	0.5	1,794	TCG
KEØL			23	21	1	1,449	TCG

SOUAB Limited-Ant HP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
AA4NU	SO2R		101	60	2:26	18,180	TCG
K3FH			26	23	0.5	1,794	TCG
KEØL			23	21	1	1,449	TCG

SOUAB LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
K9UC			764	263	30.1	602,796	TCG
N9TF			444	212	17:39	282,384	TCG
N4MCC			253	153	14:35	116,127	TCG

SOUAB Limited-Ant LP

Call	OpMode	Remote	QSOs	Mults	Op Time	Score	Club
N9TF			444	212	17:39	282,384	TCG
N4MCC			253	153	14:35	116,127	TCG

TENNESSEE QSO PARTY 2024 RULES

Thanks to the hard work by W0AG, AD4EB, WF7T and others, the TN QSO Party rules have been revamped for 2024. The contest is now ten hours long, and a new Rover category has been added. Now is a good time to review the TQP rules for 2024, and start planning our operations. The sunspots should provide a boost this year. Let's hope for some good short skip. Here is a direct link to the 2024 TQP rules:

<https://tnqp.org/rules/>

HOW IT ALL STARTED – Ned Swartz, K1GU

This is my story – *and I'm sticking to it!*

I'm from the Boston area, married to an East Tennessee gal, and am a (University of) Tennessee Dad. I joined TCG just before arriving permanently 20 years ago. Except for the personal details, my start in radio is not much different from what has appeared here earlier; crystal set with a cat's whisker as a cub scout. I wound the coil with enameled wire. My uncle, who had been to navy radar school, "installed" a wire antenna in the attic of my family's rented house. I fell asleep to the Red Sox games with a magnetic headset under my pillow.

Between my 5th and 6th grade years (in 1958) my parents bought a house, and I got my own bedroom. They had a Westinghouse "table" radio the size of a microwave oven with AM, FM, and a shortwave band. After dark the propaganda stations came blasting in the 7 Mhz broadcast band; Radio Moscow, VOA, BBC, Radio Free Europe. It was during the height of the cold war. My parents gave me their old "kitchen" radio, a white phenolic RCA; AM plus two SW bands. It took up residence next to my bed, where I listened to the 50 KW AM stations across the northern states. SWL DXing I suppose.

I heard the hams on AM phone and thought that talking back and forth was pretty amazing. I enrolled in a class leading to the Novice exam at the Boston Museum of Science, mostly teens, but also a good number of adults. At the exam, mysteriously, or maybe miraculously, I somehow put down 25 straight correct characters. The instructors went over the written test answers so I knew I passed. My uncle gave me a Heathkit AR-3. He taught me how to solder and supervised me over several Saturdays. Amazingly, it worked when I finished assembly, but only up to 15 MHz or so.

Thanks to the ARRL Handbook and a shelf of QSTs at the library, I put up a low 40M dipole. I skipped lunch at school to save my allowance and bought a Globe Scout 680 and a novice band crystal. I was ready to go when my ticket arrived in the mail after 3 months, last day of school, 8th grade, June 1961. My call sign was KN1SOP. I soon found I had no idea what to do. None of my CQ's were

answered. Perhaps because they were 5 minutes long? I resorted to going to a house marked with a tower and a TA-33 and rang the bell. I was met by K1OQX (SK) and his blind son my age, K1NDF. They put me on 80 and talked me through my first QSO.

Through the rest of high school and college I went through a series of radios then sold everything after commissioning in the air force. Got back on the air at Navigator training in CA, went directly to Asia, came back to TX, bought an S-Line, then a house. Married the girl from TN next door. Left her at the altar for Okinawa (KR6CN and visiting op at KG6ALY), back to K1SOP/5, then Asia but KR6 calls no longer valid. TX again, chose to remain married and leave the air force but they sent me back 1 mo' time. Then grad school in Boston and resumed flying in the air guard. Ham with a semiconductor test start-up hired me. Got a house. Sold the still boxed S-Line. Two kids showed up. Went to a defense job at a MIT lab. (Not smart or nerdy enough to go to school there but OK to work.) Retired from the air force w/27.5 years. Jumped back on the air in 1999 feet first into contesting after some 22 years essentially QRT. Joined YCCC where I actually knew people from high school days, after which I got my K1GU call.

HAMVENTION 2024

There has already been some good discussion on the TCG email reflector about the upcoming Dayton Hamvention. If you have not already booked your hotel room and Contest University registration, now is the time. Dayton has a little bit of something for everyone. I highly recommend that every avid contest operator check out The Hamvention at least once. There's nothing quite like being among a bunch of testers. Nobody really understands testers except other testers. The Dayton Hamvention provides the ultimate opportunity for such encounters to take place.

Contest University (CTU) is a great opportunity to meet and learn from fellow testers. There is no better opportunity to place a name with a call, and share stories and tips with the folks we work regularly. Nobody understands a tester like a fellow tester. Discover that you are not alone!

TCG MARCH ZOOM SESSION

Please mark your calendars for the next TCG Zoom session: **WEDNESDAY March 20 at 7:00 PM Central** time. That's **8:00 PM Eastern** time. Topic to be determined, but we will include an ARRL DX SSB contest recap. Stay tuned to the TCG reflector for more information.

The TCG Zoom sessions are fun, informative, and a good way to say hello to your fellow members outside of the hurried pace of a contest. We'd like to encourage more members to join in. Details on how to join the session have been posted to the TCG email reflector by WF7T. It's always a good idea to check in early, especially if you have not used Zoom in a while. It can take several minutes to update the software and test your microphone and camera setup. We hope that you will join us for the next session.

NEW MEMBERS

No new members this month:

TCG DUES RENEWAL REMINDER

TCG dues renewal notices are arriving via the Ham Club Online system. The easiest and most efficient way to renew your membership dues is use the PayPal link provided. Other methods include sending a check to our treasurer, K0EJ, or sending dues directly to the TCG PayPal address, available directly from K0EJ. It takes considerable time to keep up with the edge cases. We appreciate our members paying dues promptly, thus keeping your TCG membership current.

UPCOMING CONTESTS

The following table is a list of the upcoming contests which qualify for the TCG Most Radioactive Award. For more information on the MRA, please refer to K4TCG.ORG under the TCG INFO section. Thanks to AD4EB for this list, and to Ted W4NZ for administering the TCG Most Radioactive Award.

March 2, 2024 ARRL International DX Contest, SSB
March 9, 2024 Idaho QSO Party
March 9, 2024 Oklahoma QSO Party
March 9, 2024 Stew Perry Topband Challenge-Mar
March 10, 2024 North American Sprint, RTTY Mar
March 10, 2024 Wisconsin QSO Party
March 16, 2024 BARTG HF RTTY Contest
March 16, 2024 Russian DX Contest
March 16, 2024 Virginia QSO Party
March 24, 2024 North American Sprint SSB Contest, Spring
March 30, 2024 CQ WW WPX Contest, SSB

April 6, 2024 EA RTTY Contest
April 6, 2024 SP DX Contest
April 6, 2024 Louisiana QSO Party
April 6, 2024 Missouri QSO Party
April 6, 2024 Mississippi QSO Party
April 13, 2024 Georgia QSO Party
April 13, 2024 New Mexico QSO Party
April 13, 2024 IG-RY World Wide RTTY Contest
April 13, 2024 North Dakota QSO Party
April 19, 2024 Holy Land DX Contest
April 20, 2024 CQMM DX Contest
April 20, 2024 Michigan QSO Party
April 20, 2024 Nebraska QSO Party
April 13, 2024 North Dakota QSO Party
April 20, 2024 Ontario QSO Party
April 27, 2024 SP DX RTTY Contest
April 27, 2024 Florida QSO Party
April 27, 2024 Helvetia Contest
April 28, 2024 BARTG Sprint 75

Good luck to everyone in the upcoming WPX SSB Contest at the end of this month! Don't forget to mark your calendars and please RSVP for the upcoming TCG brunch gathering **April 20** at K4RO.

73, —Kirk K4RO