

# Nashville ARC June 2023



What Is This Thing Called Contesting?

Why Would I Ever Want To Try It?

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# Why Operate Contests?



- Contesting is FUN
- “Can you hear me now? Yes I can!”
- Learn capabilities
- **Operating awards** – DXCC, Triple Play, Worked All States





# Why Operate Contests?

- Serious competition
- Multi operator teams
- Mobile operations
- Station construction
- No shortage of challenges

The image shows the cover of the National Contest Journal (NCJ) 40th Anniversary Issue. The cover is purple and white. At the top left, the letters 'NCJ' are prominently displayed in a large, white, serif font, with a small diamond-shaped logo containing the letters 'N C J' and 'R B E R T' inside. To the right of 'NCJ' is the text 'NATIONAL CONTEST JOURNAL' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. Below this, the website 'www.ncjweb.com' and 'Volume 41 Number 1' are listed. The issue is dated 'January/February 2013' and is page '14'. A gold seal on the right side of the cover reads '40 YEARS' and '40th Anniversary Issue'. The main content area features a list of articles and two photographs. The top photograph shows a man in a light blue shirt sitting at a desk with multiple computer monitors, working in a well-equipped shack. The bottom photograph shows three men standing together, smiling. A caption below the photographs reads: 'Top: VE9EJ tunes for multipliers in his well-equipped shack. Read his profile inside! Bottom: Past NCJ editors (L-R): K7BV, K9LA, and K8TD join other NCJ pioneers in recalling how it was "back in the day" inside.'

40th Anniversary Issue! **40 YEARS**

- Results: Winter CW and SSB NAQPs
- Results: Winter CW, SSB and RTTY Sprints
- Game Design for Contesters –Part 4
- The ARRL 10 Meter Contest from KP2A
- Excellent, Easy and Cheap Common-Mode Chokes

Top: VE9EJ tunes for multipliers in his well-equipped shack. Read his profile inside!  
Bottom: Past NCJ editors (L-R): K7BV, K9LA, and K8TD join other NCJ pioneers in recalling how it was "back in the day" inside.

# Learn by Operating



- There are really no “secrets” in contesting
- Knowledge is gained through experience
- There are no shortcuts to gaining experience; time in the operating chair is how to get it
- What were once baffling questions become second nature after time in the chair
- Main theme - it's always you against the clock
- ALWAYS play by the rules – no matter what

# Search and Pounce



- Someone has to solicit by calling CQ – Running
- Someone has to answer – Search & Pounce
- Most operators begin with S&P
- IDENTIFYING CALL SIGNS – #1 skill
- Identifying exchange information
- Random vs. edge-to-edge tuning
- Band mapping software tools

# Search and Pounce



- Learn to identify stations quickly
- Distinguish between CQ'er and S&P'er
- Must concentrate on weak signals
- Listen to CN2R and K5ZD recordings
- No guessing!
- Penalties and error rates

# Running Stations



- Why we must call CQ
- Getting up the nerve
- Study the masters
- Think LOUD
- Short gaps between
- Accuracy is #1!



# Dealing with QRM



- The bands are very crowded these days
- Does might make right?
- It's also a LISTENING contest
- Know when to hold 'em
- Save your ears





# The Contest Station



- The contest station is *never* completed
- ANTENNAS are #1
- Efficiency
- Flexibility
- Reliability
- Ergonomics



# Staying on the air



- Contesting is a good reason to stay QRV
- Build stuff to last
- Weatherproofing
- Operator maintenance
- Synergy & motivation



# Top Ten Rookie Mistakes



- Not Listening
- Sending extra stuff
- Not understanding the courtesy of rhythm
- Calling off frequency
- Not signing properly
- Information sent out of sequence
- Improper phonetics
- Sending wrong call
- Handling repeats
- Correcting call signs
- Poor audio

# The Contest Meta View



- Moving beyond simply copying call signs
- Higher level view of the contest operation
- What is happening in the overall contest?
- Band conditions, and how they affect you
- Station monitoring
- The contest postmortem

# Competition



- The joy of competition
- You've got to play to win
- Playing by the rules
- Winning really only matters to you - Few will remember
- Exceptional efforts are recognized by your peers



# Gaining Perspective



- The Art of the Possible
- One BIG playing field
- Understanding geographic limitations
- Respecting your competition
- Discover strengths by operating
- Domestic vs. DX
- Strive for constant improvement
- Everyone is NOT cheating

# Contesting Clubs



- There is a thriving contesting community
- Share our joy and struggles
- Club and Team competition



# Contesting Community



- Contesting history
- Rules changes
- Current competitors and Silent Keys
- Archives resources
- Giving back to contesting



7/13/2014



# Thank You



Don't forget to have fun!

[K4TCG.ORG](http://K4TCG.ORG)

[TNQP.ORG](http://TNQP.ORG)

[CWOPS.ORG](http://CWOPS.ORG)

