August 2025

Editor: Kevan Nason, N4XL

Thank you to our group leadership:
President – Ed, K3DNE
Vice President - Dave, WN4AFP
Treasurer – Scott, KG9V
Secretary – Kevan, N4XL
Web Master – Frank, KG4IGC
SFCG Webpage: swampfoxcontestgroup.com

Deeply Regret to Say Steve Reichlyn AA4V is a SK

I am sorry to have to share that our good friend Steve, AA4V has made his last QSO. Steve passed away peacefully about 9:30pm last night. Funeral services will be held Tuesday at a time TBD.

Steve was one of the kindest, most considerate people you would ever meet. In a conversation with he would take a genuine interest in you and ask questions about you, not just share about himself.

One of the fondest memories Rick, W4GE, and I often recall was Steve's incredible knowledge and memory. He knew every country and amateur radio prefix off the top of his head and could quote you several operators in that country that he had talked with and probably visited with.

Steve was a DXer but also introduced a number of us to contesting and DXpeditioning. He was especially proud of reaching the DX Challenge level of 3000 band-countries. I believe he had 3010 total.

He will be truly missed.

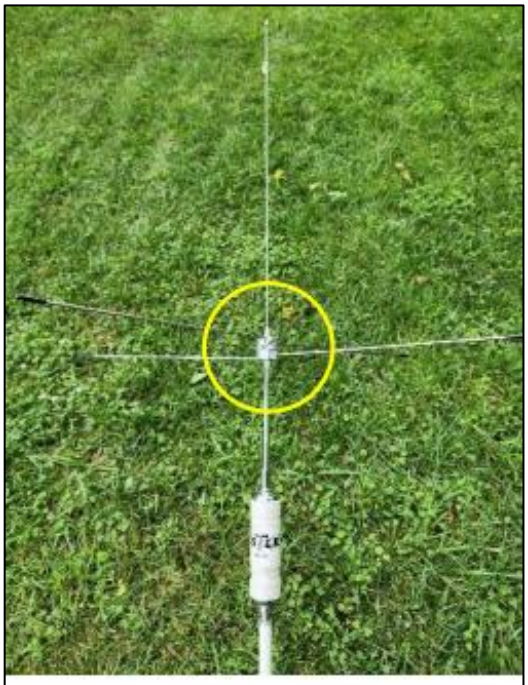
73,
Dave, AA4VT

Contest Tips:

- From W3LPL's CTU presentation How to Improve the Competitive Performance of Your Contest Station
    - Identify realistic time phased personal contest goals for selected contests, entry categories and competition region
        - first place winner, or
        - consistently placing in the top three, or
        - consistently placing in the top ten, or
        - successfully competing with your selected peer
    - Identify the realistic constraints that limit your station improvements
        - desired time frame for achieving your contest goals
        - amount of your available time to implement station improvements
        - available physical space for more antennas and station equipment
        - annual funds available to support your station improvements
    - Achieve a balance between your goals and constraints
    - During and After Every Contest Prepare Notes Documenting Your Station's Strengths and Weaknesses Compared to Your Peer Competitors
        - Identify every aspect of your station's performance that was strongly competitive compared to your peer competitors
        - Identify every aspect your station's performance that was not competitive compared to your peer competitors
        - Identify improvements that your peer competitors can't match
        - Identify every opportunity for station improvement that could have improved your score in this contest, in priority order by:
            - estimated score improvement resulting from each improvement
            - degree of difficulty in achieving each improvement
            - practicality of achieving each improvement
        - impediments to achieving each improvement
        - expense to achieve each improvement
    - Annual inspections are essential to antenna, rotator and coax cable reliability and performance
        - Inspect coax cable for cuts, cracks, damage and moisture intrusion
            - cuts, chaffing and wear rotator loops
            - Water intrusion at electrical and physical attachments to antennas
        - Compare coaxial cable losses to prior measurements
        - Compare antenna VSWRs to prior measurements
        - Inspect connector water proofing and PL-259 tightness
        - Inspect for rope wear - replace rope before it fails
        - Inspect antenna wire for wear and connections to feed lines
        - Repair or replace unreliable, failing or overloaded rotators
        - Inspect antennas and coaxial cables for lightning damage
        - Inspect antennas, feed lines and rotators for wind damage
        - *(Editors Note: At least a week before a contest I am going to put a major effort into I do a visual inspection from the ground of all antennas, feed lines, guy's and ropes. Inside the shack I check SWR on all antennas, verify PL259*

tightness I also read the rules. At least three days before the contest I set up my logging program.)

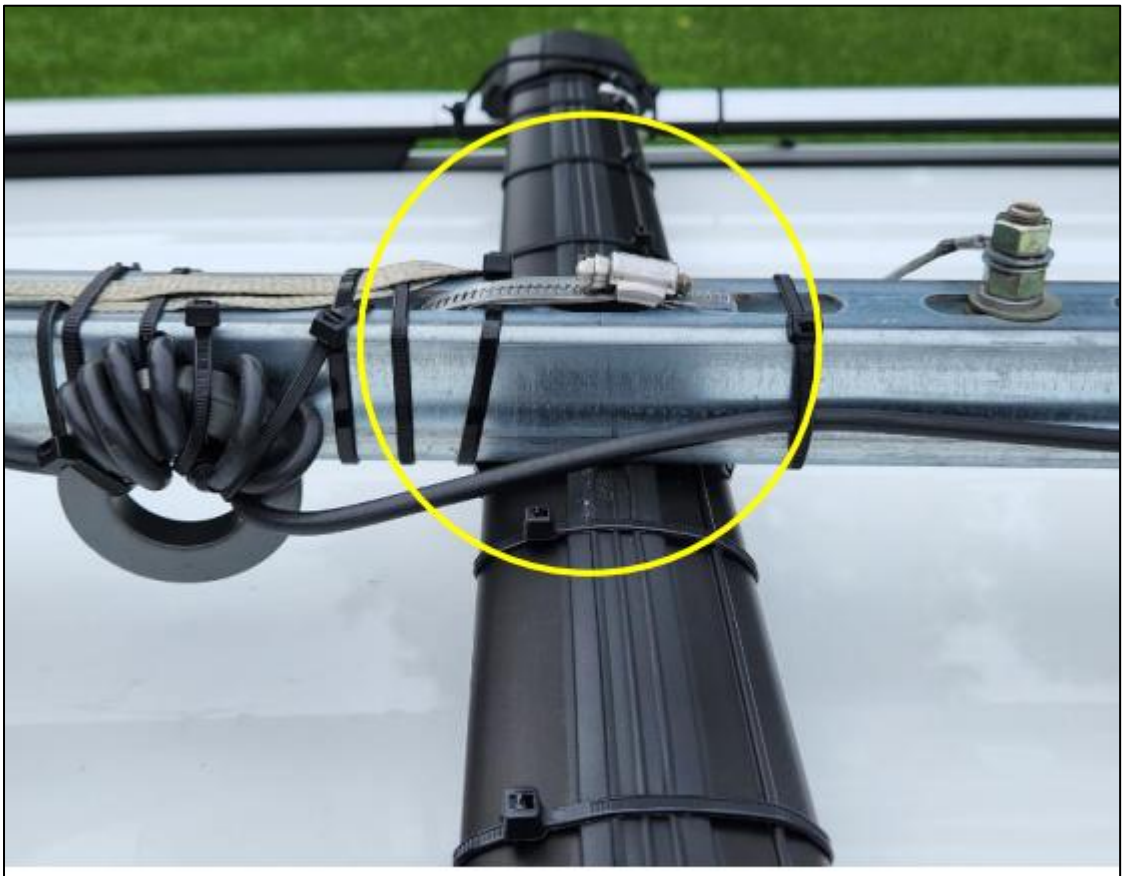
- From Jim Hall's AD4EB CTU presentation RadioSport – Taking It on the Road. *(Editors Note: Some points are paraphrased)*
    - Know the height of the antennas on your vehicle and beware of low overhead obstructions. (i.e.: low bridges)
    - Jim uses top loaded mobile antennas on HF.



RM-30 Resonator and Capacitive Top Hat

DXE Hot Rodz Hub with 6 12" Spokes

- His antenna roof mount strut



Stainless Steel Hose Clamps

- Mast Mount and Bonding

Aluminum Mounting Plate
with ½" Bonding Straps

Roof Rack Bonding Strap (x4)

Highlights From The Reflector:

- Alan W4ANT received the 1st Place US/VE Low Power SSB plaque from the 2025 GA QP. Outstanding Alan!
- As of July 29th the SFCG was #4 of 96 clubs in the SQP Club Challenge. Keep up the good work Guys!
- David AA4VT shared a link to Gaylord N6SF's website https://Qcoil.net . Gaylord manufactures loading coils for 80 and 160m verticals.
- Dave WN4AFP shared his LCR from the 2025 ARRL DX SSB Contest. With 940 Raw Q's before log checking he had a low 1.3% error rate. Contesting Tip: Improving accuracy is a free way to dramatically increase your score. Everyone should set their sites on eventually regularly getting less than a 2% error rate. The winners usually have rates of 1% or less. Good job Dave.
- Dave WN4AFP received his third plaque for being 1st in the LP CW category of the PAQP. He recently rearranged his shack to display all those plaques but I suspect he might have to add a room to the house in the not so distant future.
- Alan W4ANT changed the name he uses in various QP's from Al to his full name of Alan. A not so surprising result is people sometimes asked him "Was it Al or Alan?". Changing names can haunt you for years. I changed from Ken to Tom to make it clearer people are working me, Tom N4XL, instead of Ken K4XL. Ken is K4XL's actual name. There were just too many busted calls in my LCR's where people heard "4XL" and guessed they were working K4XL. I chose Tom because it's simple and honors past SFCG member Tom W1TEF. But… even 3 years after the change I would still have people calling me Ken.

An upcoming project at N4XL

By Kevan N4XL

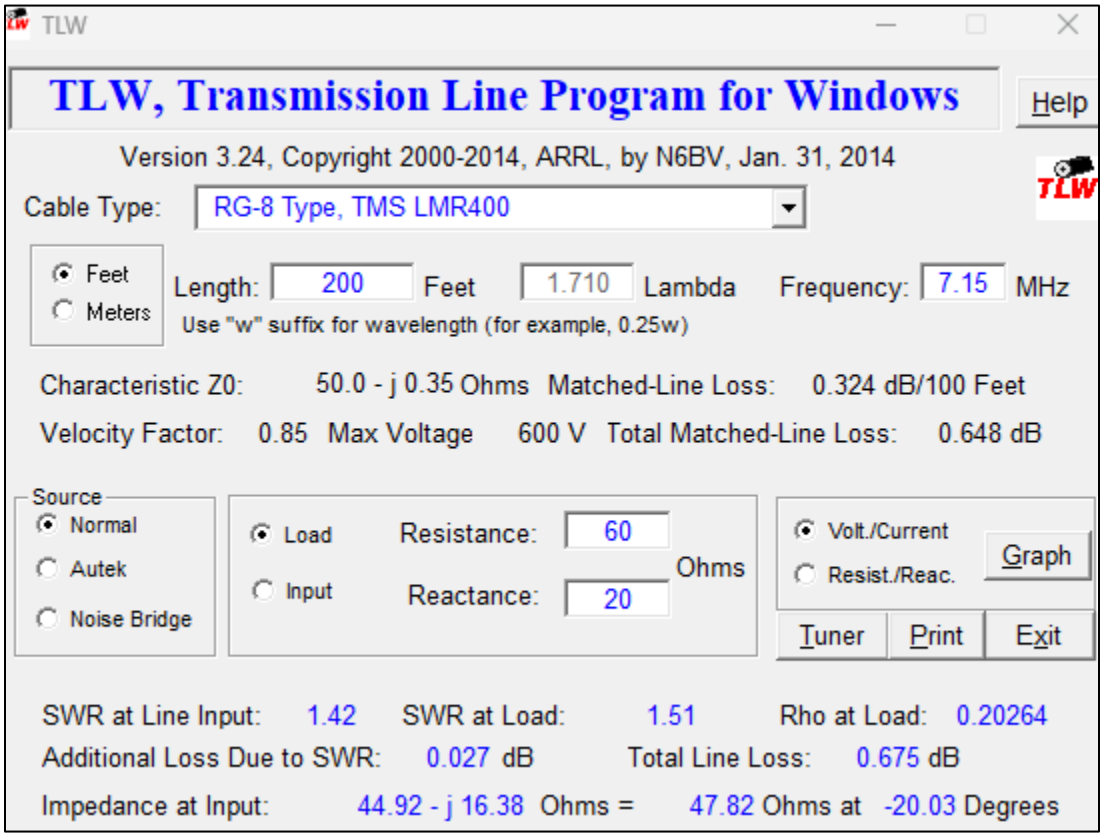
(This isn't really enough for an article, but I needed some filler.)

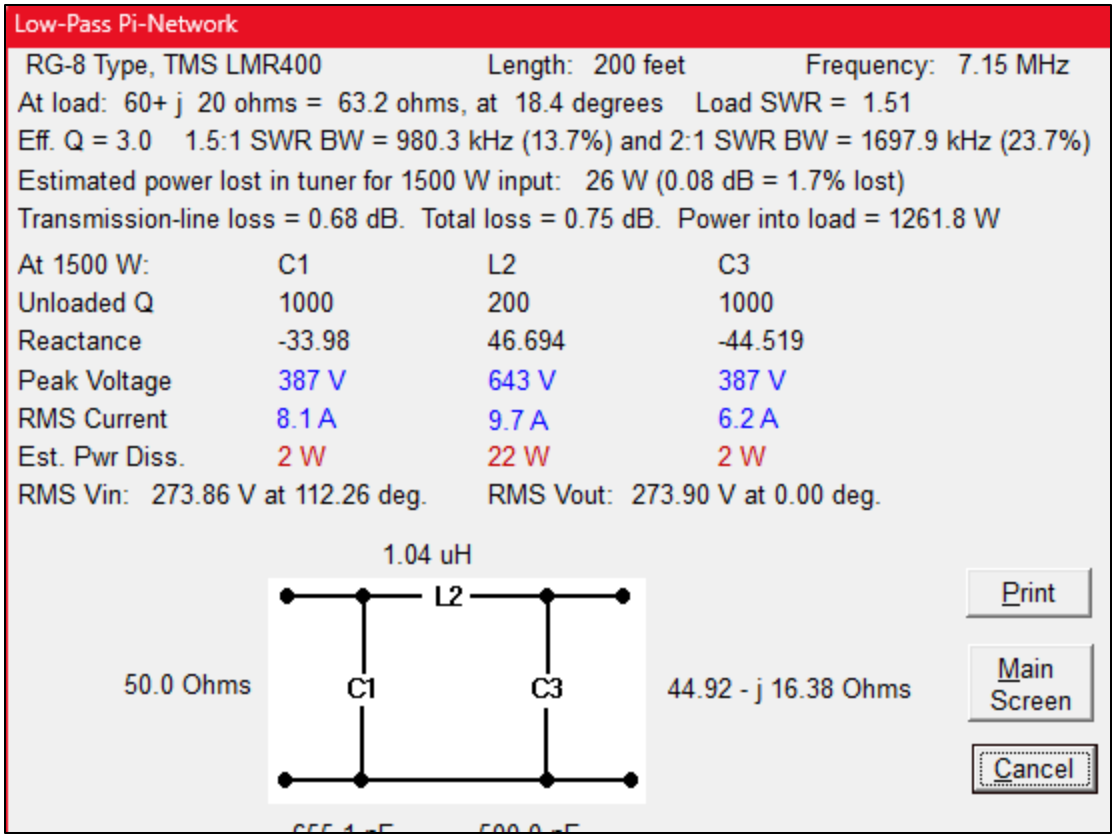
Thank you Gary AF7T for giving me two 40 meter top loaded verticals. I set one up as an elevated vertical about 18 feet high. It's been a year since I checked it, but the resonant point is well under 7.0 MHz. Somewhere down around 6.780 if I remember correctly. SWR rises to 2:1 around 7.100 or so. The antenna has a fixed assembly design with no adjustment method. I originally used an autotuner out there with my previous 40/80 dual band vertical dual band, but I removed the tuner when I put up the new antenna. Between overly long elevated counterpoise wires and 200 feet of buried feed line the SWR in the shack is still not great, but acceptable. I'm sure I'm losing some signal strength because of the antenna system loss. I'm finally in the planning stages to address that by putting in a fixed wide band matching system at the base of the antenna.

For many Hams what I'm going to do is common and no big deal, but I've never tackled such a thing. I remembered seeing the old Transmission Line for Windows (TLW)

program in the ARRL Antenna Book and a vague thought has drifted around my brain saying "That can help you." I pulled out an external CD drive and loaded the softwared included with the 24th Antenna Book. Yup. That TLW looks useful. Once I go out and measure things with my RigExpert analyzer I should be able to plug the results into TLW and have it tell me what I need to do. After choosing a matching network design, Pi or L, TLW calculates the capacitor(s) and inductor values and power ratings needed for the circuit. Although they are a bit more complicated, I'll use a Pi network because they are more wideband. If I remember correctly, they also cause less RFI. (Remember from previous newsletters I have a neighbor who has said several times, "You're attacking me with RF!" He even said that while I was in bed sleeping with all my antennas disconnected and the master station power switch turned off. A Pi network is just one more way I can show I've taken steps to reduce radiated harmonics.)

Here are a couple of screen shots showing what TLW generates. The numbers have been changed to protect the innocent… Ah… That is they aren't real because I haven't yet gotten off my keister and taken the RigExpert out there to the antenna yet. But if you haven't seen the output from TLW before it gives you an idea of what you can do with it. (Use the Autek Source screen for this method. It is a bit different from what is shown.)





I don't remember if the ARRL Antenna or Handbooks have a coil winding program in them. There are several on the Internet if not.

Observations by the Editor:

- G4JNT posted on the RSGBTechnical Groups.io about something I've in the past had problems with. I'm filing this away for future use. Older software is said to not always work in Windows 11's 64 bit operating system. Maybe it does. Andy wrote:

  With some trepidation, although I know it does work, mostly, I got round to installing Visual Studio on this new Win-11 machine so I could use VB6 and VC. I know it can be done coz I did it on the Win-11 laptop last year. I have original installation discs dating from ~2004 copied to a USB stick.

  It threw up multiple incompatibility warnings which I naturally just ignored; the blue bar slowly moved across the window, it got to 100% and then the screen just stopped. Closed it down, got a message that the installation had failed - but I knew from last time all was not lost. That is exactly what happened before. All the files seemed to be in place. So I went to the prog files ... \vis studio ... \VB98 folder and clicked VB and it runs

  The first prog that called up OLE extras (COM port in this case) needed to be redone as the new installation loses the original setup - but that's a small price to pay to

get a familiar and well used bit of software going. In spite of it being over 20 years old, still does me fine.

- I always feel inadequate when I read things like Dave WN4AFP's response to Jim K8MR posting he was ready to get on the road for the OHQP. Dave wrote, "Hi Jim, I'll be calling ya at 50 wpm all day!!!"

N1MM+ Tips:

NOTE: Unless otherwise specified references to problems people are having, solutions, and tips come from the N1MMLoggerPlus Group.io reflector. A search there for items described should turn up the original posts and replies.

- Selected changes made since last newsletter. (NOTE: These often come from a user requesting a change or fix to a problem.)
    - Message #93856 on 7/22/2025… Many SO2V/SO2R changes. Worth reading for those of you who do that.
    - Change Real Time Scoring to use a system assigned PIN, and store that pin in ini file (VA2WA) (Coded by N1MM)
    - AMQ: Disallow minimize window (Coded by N1MM)
    - AMQ: Implement ESM "double enter" for QSY to top spot option in AMQ. Note that if either AMQ has the QSY option checked, then the double enter is in effect. AMQ QSY to top spot in SO2R requires 2 AMQs (many) (Coded by N1MM)
    - AMQ: In SO2R, make QSY to top spot function skip spots for other radio' current band (Code by K3CT & N1MM)
    - WSJT List: Total re-write of WSJT List. Includes: (Coded by N2AMG) Report any error's.
        - Columns widths are adjustable by dragging separator lines in Header
        - Columns have ability to be shown or hidden (Right click on header to choose)
        - Columns are movable (Click in Header and drag to new location)
        - Separates Band and Mode by column.
        - Adds Font Sizer to list window
        - Better handling of sorts and sorts are remembered from previous sessions.
        - Adds Custom number of spots shown
- Yet another Windows PITA…

  Jim WT9U
  I use N1MM as a general logger. When operating FT8 I'm finding that after the computer has gone into screen saver mode and I try to transmit there is no output. In looking at the Win Sound I can see that the audio output switches to the CODEC 4 for the 2nd radio. If I close WSJT-X and reopen it through N1MM it reverts to the correct CODEC 3. I've checked the settings in WSJT-X and it shows CODEC 3 even

though I can see in the Sound application that it's trying to use CODEC 4. Not a huge deal but it is annoying.

Rich VE3KI
If your monitor has an audio soundcard or codec, then when it goes into screen saver mode the sound device shuts down. Even if you are not actually using that device, the shutdown triggers Windows to re-enumerate all of its sound devices, which often causes programs using other sound devices to lose contact with them. The recommended solution is to disable the soundcard in the monitor, so that Windows will not do a re-enumeration of sound devices every time the monitor goes into screen saver mode.

John K3CT
If the audio and hardware tables are going to change as a result of computer sleep or turning off your radio, you should exit the software that is using the ports or sound card.

The WSJT soundcard selection is not under N1MM Logger control. The soundcard change after re-enumeration is a WSJT function.

- Exciting! OH2XX developed a way to have a program stored on your computer get your exchange information from N1MM (Their call, your call, your exchange, and many other things) and convert the characters to voice using AI. The program is called Piper. I believe I read in the thread it is freeware.

  That type of voicing has been tried before but didn't work well for contesting but the programs were Internet based, and the inherent delay time was unacceptable. Piper being stored on your computer makes it possible. You'll need a robust processor and memory. It works so well Tom N1MM has not only integrated Piper with N1MM, but he has either started including Piper in N1MM updates or has included links inside N1MM to take you right to its homepage so you can load it (I don't remember which.) It looks like I'll need a bit of free time to set this up since it appears there is a learning curve.

  Tom was worried that if thousands of us use it simultaneously in a contest we will all sound alike. There are things in Piper that allow you to adjust the voicing to individualize it. I went to the Piper web page to read about it. I didn't spend much time rambling around but it looks to me in addition to adjusting speech speed and tone you can also do some great things like record your own voice in several files for Piper to access. If I understood correctly the program will use those files to make the voice sound like you to the point of mimicking how you sometimes use different words when conveying the same information, using your own personal cadences, and sometimes adjusting those cadences to sound more or less urgent. If you've

ever listened to an AI generated voice you know how amazingly realistic they can sound.

I'm looking forward to having time to play with this new tool. Those of you with sore throats or sleeping family members might have a look too.

The Piper threads start with message #9410 Dynamic Voice Responses which is found on the N1MM Groups.io Reflector. As of this newsletter publishing date there is still ongoing discussion under a few different message titles.

- Tom N1MM gives a diagram explaining how incoming cluster node spots and is then routed to the various places in N1MM that use spots – including networked stations. It might help some of us with wondering why we aren't seeing expected spots. Take note one thing mentioned in the drawing, but not emphasized, is the filters you set up in the cluster itself is independent of what N1MM does with spots. And if I remember correctly if you sign into different cluster nodes the filter you set up in one node could be different from a the filter you set up in a different node.

  See August 10 message #94157

- Assisted Mult & QSO (AMQ) window in Digital contests.

  Dennis W1UE
  I set up N1MM+ for the WW-Digi contest in a couple of weeks. I could not get the AMQ window to accurately display mults for the contest. Since its new, I'm figuring its operator error, but not sure so I'm writing this.

  The AMQ for either radio doesn't detect mults (for WW-Digi, its Grid Fields). It shows zero mults for all bands. Telnet is filtered so that only FT spots are passed to N1MM. It doesn't matter what "Radio" selection I choose for the band info, expected spots don't show. I can choose "Digi" or "Contest" for the "ALL" selection, but nothing works. There are also no mults indicated on the Band Maps for either radio. Every once in a while a mult does show in the AMQ window, but I haven't been able to figure out how it got there, because the bulk of them aren't there.

  The N1MM Log and Decode Windows for both Radio1 and Radio 2 seem to indicate mults correctly, it's just the AMQ that doesn't seem to be working properly. If I don't have something set up correctly, would appreciate assistance.

  Joe WB9SBD
  I don't use the AMQ window I use the WSJT Decode List to show New Mults Red calls.

  Tim N3QE

Not all contests have accurate mult counts in AMQ window. The big contests seem accurate and complete but a lot of little (maybe they're all UDC?*) contests I'm not even sure what the AMQ Mult count is based on.

I think the AMQ window and stats are indeed populated but perhaps only by what I've clicked on in the decode window (which adds it to the entry box we never touch during FT4/FT8 tests at least while it's on deck.)

Certainly a wish-list feature I'd like to see is having the AMQ window stats populated from local WSJT-X decodes which are likely to be workable perhaps combined with some user-adjustable timeout or maybe user-adjustable S/N lower limit.

Mostly I keep my eyes glued to the decode list(s).

Dennis, do you have a Packet-type source for FT4/FT8 skims? I see these show up sometimes in various RBN-enabled nodes but I honestly don't know how to turn them on and off or what rules filter them. For example in Thursday night NCCC FT4 I sometimes see skims for my own call turn up in the Telnet window. This is probably a -CC or -AR cluster question rather than a N1MM question.

(*UDC= User Defined Contest.)

Upcoming Contests:

See the WA7BNM webpages https://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcal.html

SFOTA Current Leaderboard:

2025 OVERALL STANDINGS

	CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1)	WB4HRL	276	13123	587	461	621	14792
2)	KE4EA	146	8716	1204	15	0	9935
3)	WN4AFP	69	6311	3134	43	0	9488
4)	K3DNE	30	923	6655	551	0	8129
5)	N4IQ	33	4679	476	11	0	5166
6)	K4FT	76	4732	211	6	136	5085
7)	K4QQG	35	0	3474	669	802	4945
8)	N4XL	20	3458	810	0	0	4268
9)	KZ3P	47	1636	1862	24	575	4097
10)	KD4S	64	2467	236	44	511	3258
11)	W4ANT	56	1103	1760	171	0	3034
12)	KG4IGC	7	700	438	0	1179	2317
13)	K7OM	17	729	0	0	1527	2256
14)	AA5JF	3	1394	352	0	0	1746
15)	N4QI	49	1415	196	0	120	1731
16)	KB1QU	4	612	565	0	376	1553
17)	KA2G	22	0	1086	442	0	1528
18)	WA4LDU	32	181	341	495	381	1398
19)	NV4T	22	0	889	315	0	1204
20)	KS4YX	20	358	40	221	580	1199
21)	NI7R	12	960	3	0	0	963
22)	KK4MRG	18	0	846	18	27	891
23)	W1RPG	13	0	756	0	6	762
24)	K2SX	15	660	0	0	0	660
25)	AA4SD	5	325	0	0	0	325
26)	N1UZ	3	88	0	0	215	303
27)	KS4VJ	4	0	42	49	0	91

2025 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS

CALL	CW QSO'S
WB4HRL	13123
KE4EA	8716
WN4AFP	6311
K4FT	4732
N4IQ	4679
N4XL	3458
KD4S	2467
KZ3P	1636
N4QI	1415
AA5JF	1394
W4ANT	1103
NI7R	960
K3DNE	923
K7OM	729
KG4IGC	700
K2SX	660
KB1QU	612
KS4YX	358
AA4SD	325
WA4LDU	181
N1UZ	88

CALL	SSB QSO'S
K3DNE	6655
K4QQG	3474
WN4AFP	3134
KZ3P	1862
W4ANT	1760
KE4EA	1204
KA2G	1086
NV4T	889
KK4MRG	846
N4XL	810
W1RPG	756
WB4HRL	587
KB1QU	565
N4IQ	476
KG4IGC	438
AA5JF	352
WA4LDU	341
KD4S	236
K4FT	211
N4QI	196
KS4VJ	42
KS4YX	40
NI7R	3

CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S
K4QQG	669
K3DNE	551
WA4LDU	495
WB4HRL	461
KA2G	442
NV4T	315
KS4YX	221
W4ANT	171
KS4VJ	49
KD4S	44
WN4AFP	43
KZ3P	24
KK4MRG	18
KE4EA	15
N4IQ	11
K4FT	6

CALL	RTTY QSO'S
K7OM	1527
KG4IGC	1179
K4QQG	802
WB4HRL	621
KS4YX	580
KZ3P	575
KD4S	511
WA4LDU	381
KB1QU	376
N1UZ	215
K4FT	136
N4QI	120
KK4MRG	27
W1RPG	6

3830 Activity:

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
222Up				
08/03/25	WA4LDU	Single Op	LP	3,386

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
50FallSprnt				
08/12/25	AA5JF/R(AA5JF)	Rover	LP	72
08/10/25	K3DNE	Single Op	HP	221
AlQP				
07/28/25	AA5JF	SOCW	LP	8
07/27/25	K4FT	SOCW	LP	126
07/28/25	KD4S	SOMixed	HP	630
07/27/25	KZ3P	SOMixed	LP	252
07/27/25	N4QI	SOMixed	LP	32
07/30/25	WA4LDU	SOMixed	LP	32
07/27/25	WB4HRL	SOMixed	HP	208
07/28/25	WN4AFP	SOMixed	LP	1,496
HiQP				
08/24/25	K4FT	SOAB	LP	27
08/25/25	KZ3P	SOAB	HP	216
08/24/25	N2ZZ	SOAB	HP	560
08/25/25	WB4HRL	SOAB	HP	102
IOTA				
07/27/25	N4QI	SO12Mixed	LP	6,745
MDC QP				
08/10/25	AA5JF	Fixed	HP	12
08/11/25	K4FT	Fixed	LP	320
08/10/25	KD4S	Fixed	HP	56
08/13/25	KE4EA	Fixed	LP	562
08/10/25	KZ3P	Fixed	LP	842
08/11/25	N2ZZ	Fixed	HP	68
08/16/25	W1RPG	Fixed	LP	8
08/10/25	WB4HRL	Fixed	LP	308
08/18/25	WN4AFP	Fixed	LP	400
NAQP CW August				
08/03/25	AA4SD	Single Op	LP	104
08/03/25	K4FT	Single Op	LP	420
08/05/25	K7OM	Single Op Assisted	LP	6,496
08/03/25	KD4S	Single Op Assisted	LP	26,400
08/03/25	KE4EA	Single Op	LP	30,492
08/03/25	KZ3P	Single Op Assisted	LP	13,213
08/03/25	N4QI	Single Op	LP	3,403
08/03/25	N4XL	Single Op Assisted	LP	136,695
08/03/25	NI7R	Single Op Assisted	LP	5,459
08/03/25	NU4E	Single Op Assisted	LP	2,100

Contest	Call	Class	Pwr	Score
08/03/25	W4IX	Single Op Assisted	LP	137,488
08/03/25	WB4HRL	Single Op Assisted	LP	19,504
08/07/25	WN4AFP	Single Op Assisted	LP	80,325
NAQP SSB August				
08/18/25	AA4VT	Single Op Assisted	LP	5,100
08/17/25	K3DNE	Single Op Assisted	LP	110,840
08/17/25	K4QQG	Single Op	LP	2,340
08/17/25	KZ3P	Single Op	LP	24,380
08/17/25	N4IQ	Single Op Assisted	LP	8,052
08/17/25	NU4E	Single Op Assisted	LP	139,332
08/18/25	W1RPG	Single Op Assisted	LP	756
08/17/25	W4ANT	Single Op Assisted	LP	13,115
08/18/25	WN4AFP	Single Op Assisted	LP	15,640
OhQP				
08/24/25	AA5JF	Single Op	HP	42,082
08/24/25	K4FT	Single Op	LP	480
08/24/25	K4QQG	Single Op	HP	110
08/24/25	KZ3P	Single Op	HP	6,954
08/24/25	N2ZZ	Single Op	HP	6,448
08/24/25	NV4T	Single Op	LP	1,085
08/25/25	W1RPG	Single Op	LP	80
08/24/25	WA4LDU	Single Op	LP	2,720
SARTG				
08/19/25	K7OM/4(K7OM)	SOAB	HP	85,200
08/17/25	WA4LDU	SOAB	LP	16,640
WAE CW				
08/12/25	KZ3P	Single Op	LP	644
08/11/25	N4QI	Single Op	LP	98
08/14/25	NU4E	Single Op	HP	336
WRT Aug 1				
08/01/25	KZ3P	Single Op	LP	399
YO HF				
08/24/25	N4QI	SO Mixed	LP	2,544

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73 es QRT de N4XL