



Solid Copy

The International CWops Newsletter

September

2013

Issue No. 44



Personal Wouff Hong of W9ILY

CWops "CWT"

11,25 September 2013

Start times: 13Z, 19Z, 03Z (12, 26 September)

1-hour each session

Exchange: name/number (members)
name/SPC (non-members)

CWA Days

4, 18 September 2013: 1300Z, 1900Z, 0300Z(+1)

CWops "neighborhood"

Look for CWops on 1.818, 3.528, 7.028, 10.118,
14.028, 18.078, 21.028, 24.908, 28.028, 50.098

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President's Message

I am writing this on Sunday at 9:45 PM in my hotel room in Tokyo. I flew to Japan on Friday



evening and spent Saturday and today at the Tokyo Ham Fair, at the Big Site. I will have a longer report later on in this issue but I just wanted to say that I believe it was successful. We spoke to many CW

operators there and gave out 250 CWops buttons, 300 handouts about CW Open, and almost 400 handouts about CWops.

I want to thank Masumi JA3AVO, Moto JA1GZV and Atsu JE1TRV for helping to staff our booth. I also want to thank JE1TRV for all his help and support in arranging for the booth and helping me get around on my first trip to Tokyo. JA1WLQ stopped by the booth with some vintage QSL cards from the US. One confirmed a 1968 contact with John K4BAI, now CWops #76!



CWops is doing really, really well. The CW Academy “gang” is filling out their student loads very effectively and the courses are all slated to start right after September 1. One of our advisors got an early start because of scheduling conflicts and is already well along with his group. Several new advisors that joined our ranks after the April/May session will be advising for the first time. My thanks to all the advisors for all your efforts.

Saturday, August 31, we will be holding our third annual CW Open. I will be QRV, full time, in all three sessions. I entreat you all, once again, to do whatever you can to make this a success. If you can do all the sessions, that will be great. If you can only do one or two, that is fine. If you can only get on for an hour in each session, please do that. Whether you are a contester or not, contests are judged by the turnout they attract. Everyone has more fun when there are more participants. Let’s show the ham world how a CW-only contest can attract significant numbers.

Don’t forget CWT each second and fourth Wednesday. These twice-monthly events continue to increase in popularity. Let’s keep up the good work. As you no doubt heard, the ARRL is planning to propose a 2.8 KHz limit on the bandwidth of digital signals that will coexist with CW signals in portions of the CW sub-bands. We will have a tough time arguing about encroachment if the CW sub-bands are largely unused on weekdays and nights. CWT is doing its part to show that at least for six hours per month a portion of our sub-bands are well used.

Don't forget to keep track of any QSOs you have that go over 20 minutes, and submit a point for each one using the QTX entry on the website. Some of our CWops members will again be engaging in notable DXpeditions. We will bring you word of those, too. Ragchewing, contesting and DXing – three things people use Morse to do, and two of three areas of focus for our club.

See you all in CWT and CW Open.

73,

Rob K6RB

From the Editor – QRV Remote!



Could it really be the end of Summer?! Well, here in the northern hemisphere, at least, it is and I'm not ready for Fall. My 40M beam suddenly stopped working, I didn't get my 160M dipole up higher, and my 40-80M vertical is tilting as freeze/thaw cycles threaten to rupture its support post. Alas, antenna projects took a back seat to Other Stuff this summer. Fortunately, the 40M problem is at the valley QTH where antenna work can proceed all year long.

At least I did succeed in my most challenging system integration project this summer, setting up the better, quieter mountain QTH for remote operation from the simpler, noisier valley QTH. That was a kick! It's not done yet – I just got on the air in late August with a number of compromises to optimize, problems to solve and features to add. But the hardest part, getting the pair of K3s to communicate via a pair of RemoteRig boxes, is almost done. It works, albeit with some rough edges. I'm CW only for now and not in any hurry to build a mic adapter. I haven't automated bandswitching but I know what to do. And I'm still dealing with some Internet domain name server issues. But I'm on the air and can say that the RemoteRig architecture is brilliant, the detailed design is good and the implementation is a networking expert's delight. I'm not a networking expert, but if I were there appears to be no end to its flexibility. And a newbie like me can leave most of the many parameters at their default values.

It's fascinating to be able to operate remotely. My first QSO was with ... me! I used a K3 in Saratoga as the control head for a K3 transmitting out of Truckee signing N6XI and a KX3 transmitting locally in Saratoga signing club call WF6C as my own QSO counterparty. The slight delay between paddle action and received signal (80-100 msec?) would be frustrating if you had to operate that way, but you don't. For normal QSOs, you send with a local keyer that is built in to the control-side RemoteRig box and listen to its local monitor. You turn monitor gain down to zero on the remote transceiver and it really sounds like local operation. Keying is easy! I can even compare my smaller, valley antennas to the bigger ones in the mountains. That will be an ongoing project. In fact, the whole remote setup will evolve for many months to come. If you haven't yet tried this kind of ham radio, do consider it. You don't need two QTHs of your own – just set up your single location so you can operate it from a hotel room, office, the homes of friends or relatives, ... or your own back yard!. Don't forget to put on your "Patience Hat," though. It's not exactly an easy task but success is ample reward.

Glenn VE3GNA (CWops #457) writes:

“Many of the members of CWops are former or present traffic handlers, but many more may not know the National Traffic System (NTS) from scrambled eggs. I would like to suggest that each member who completes a QSO for the QTX award send his counterpart a radiogram thanking him or her for the contact. The message need not be long – just a simple ‘Thank you for the contact and rag chew. Let's do it again’ would suffice. If you are unsure of formatting a message, the ARRL website can help. Of course you must stick to the rules regarding third party agreements. Not all countries have such an agreement with others.

“Currently the bulk of the traffic handled on NTS is of the ‘bulk’ or ‘common text’ variety. This keeps us in practice but it is nice to have different messages from time to time. It goes without saying that any messages should be transmitted on CW. After they leave your hands, it matters not.

“Think about it and give it a try. You may discover a new part of the hobby which will give you lots of satisfaction. Whenever I deliver a message I have received from another person, ham or not, I get a chance to make a new friend.”

Our Page 1 photo this month is the personal Wouff Hong of John W9ILY. He reports that he found it on a beach and punishes himself regularly with it (just over the head, though).

I hope you enjoy this month's Solid Copy. In addition to the regular columns, we have a [DXpedition travelogue](#) by Jerry AC4BT, a discussion by Dallas K1DW about the accuracy demands of [various kinds of CW operating](#), and a report replete with photos by our President, Rob K6RB, from the [Tokyo Ham Fair](#).

73,

Rick N6XI

My DXpedition/Vacation to KP2 - U.S. Virgin Islands

Jerry Weisskohl AC4BT, CWops # 1148

I just came back from a week-long DXpedition vacation to St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. I had never been on a DXpedition and have never experienced what it's like to be the DX station. While KP2 and the Caribbean are not by any means exotic locations or rare DX, it is certainly popular and generates huge pileups once identified on the spotting nets. If you're stateside, I guess the closest thing to being the DX station is contesting where many stations are calling you at the same time.

I operate strictly CW and am definitely not an active or experienced contester. My participation in contests has been mainly to search out DX entities I need on certain bands. In fact, I always wondered what the obsession is with operating contests. It seems many people are “addicted” to

contests and get a huge rush or high hearing all those stations calling at the same time. What could be thrilling about hundreds of stations calling you at the same time? It seemed like pure chaos to me. Only a crazy person would purposely put themselves “in harm’s way!” That was my thinking when I started out on this venture. It occurred to me that I should try to prepare myself for dealing with pileups but decided against it and went into it cold. I mean, how bad could it be?

So it was with some trepidation and fear that I decided to go ahead with this planned trip. I rented Philip KP2M’s Radio Reef property in St. Croix for a week. The price is very reasonable and the property sits up on a hill with several towers each proudly supporting a beam antenna. The accommodations are great. The house has two levels. Brian KP2HC is currently the caretaker and lives in the upper level and the entire lower level is rented out. The views are spectacular. The property has a panoramic 360 degree view of the island and beaches. There’s a hammock and a huge patio to take in the view and enjoy the great weather, especially with the aid of a rum “beverage” or two. In short, the accommodations are outstanding! And Brian was the perfect host, ensuring that all my questions were answered and that I had everything I needed.

The ham shack is a separate structure that has two operating positions and is air conditioned, should you need that. I used the station which had an Elecraft K3, the radio I use at home, so no problems there since I was very familiar with it. I brought along my Begali Expedition key and I was all set to go. Surprisingly, I had no problems clearing customs with the Expedition key. I had it near the top of my carry-on bag, expecting to give a long explanation about Morse code and ham radio, but the Customs people were not very interested in it. (They did take great joy in confiscating my bottle of shampoo!).

I didn’t know that keying CQ CQ CQ de KP2/AC4BT could cause so many people to respond and all at once! The power of the Internet was at work and I was advertised on the spotting nets in no time. I took a few calls, thinking to myself that this isn’t too bad, it’s manageable... and then... without warning, it was like an avalanche of calls all one on top of each other calling me at the same time. Total and complete chaos. And “people enjoy this?” I thought to myself. It took several minutes before I realized that the RIT was my friend and began using it to get some separation. I operated about an hour like that and then shut down for the evening. I was totally beat up.

The next day I made some adjustments and used the word “UP” after my CQ and that really helped. I got better with time and after a couple of days I was able to effectively handle the calls, pulling out a couple of letters and asking for the rest, demanding that I only wanted to hear the letters I asked for, etc. The chaos soon became manageable and I have to admit, it was a lot of fun! And I can definitely see how this could become addictive and habit forming! The Surgeon General should put his warning on the side of each radio that is used for DX and contesting. In fact, on the plane trip home I was already going through withdrawal!

Since this was a vacation (as my non-ham wife reminded me several times) I spent most of my time sightseeing and on the beach. My operating time was limited to about two to three hours a day,

usually in the evening. Most mornings I spent a little time on 17 and 15 meters before heading out to the beach. I worked 15, 17, 20, 30 and 40 meters. The band conditions were not great but I managed about 800 contacts and logged 80 countries including India, Indonesia, Singapore, China, Japan, Australia and most of the Middle East.

I made a special effort to pick up weaker stations that were not using an amplifier and probably didn't have the best antennas. I've been on that side of the fence most of my ham career. It was very gratifying to hear the thanks from a small signal from England for picking him up on 30 Meters and giving him a new DX country. This did slow me down a bit but the pileup was very well behaved and was not a problem.



My wife took a picture of three locals on stilts, which I used for my "original" KP2 QSL card. The picture was so good that if I had run out of money I could have earned enough to fly back home by selling them as postcards!

When I arrived home I went on the ARRL Log Book Of the World (LoTW) site and requested a new certificate for KP2/AC4BT. It was very easy to generate the certificate and upload it. No documentation was needed. In about 90 minutes ARRL emailed me back the new certificate. I then uploaded the 800 QSO's, using the new certificate, to LoTW and also to eQSL. In a couple of weeks I already have about 50 of the 80 countries confirmed showing that many hams are using the LoTW system. I also found about 20 direct QSL cards waiting for me when I returned home.

This was a great vacation and if you find yourself, like I was, sticking your toes in the DX/contesting water and afraid to fully jump in, then by all means go on a DXpedition vacation! This is something you have to experience yourself. It's not the same if you

just read about it! I'm already planning next year's trip!

Types of CW Operating

Dallas Ward K1DW, CWops #326

Here are some thoughts that may help those who are interested in learning CW, generated in the course of teaching CW Academy Level One.

Once a copy/send speed level is achieved, what do you do with the skill? Each of us has different ability levels which can be used in more than one way:

1. Casual QSOs don not demand high accuracy. “Ur RST 5nn, my name is, QTH is, rig is, antenna is, been ham for, age is, etc.” These establish a common ground of interest that leads to exchanges of other thoughts, ideas and reflections.
2. Chasing DX demands high accuracy for the station calling the DX. “P5DX 599 de W5RU” must be copied correctly. Various mechanisms can be used to send accurately while head copy of received information can be typed into a logging program.
3. Contesting also demands high accuracy as there are scoring penalties for wrong call and busted exchanges. “W1AW TU 121 A W5RU 55 LA” is a complex exchange used in ARRL Sweepstakes. Usually “F” keys are used to send prerecorded information while copied received information is logged into a computer program via keyboard.
4. Traffic Handling requires high accuracy but fills are sent as requested. “NR 150 R HTX K6RB ARL 15 JAN 1” can be sent in various ways and copied as needed for delivery.
5. CW high speed competition demands a very high level of accuracy. Wrong calls are not acceptable and score is reduced. Copy Calls at 50 WPM and higher, machine sent and keyboard copy. Copy the ARRL code practice transmissions for achievement certificates. Plain text is sent at 10 through 35 WPM and you must have one minute of solid copy out of five. HST is an international competition on accuracy for real high speed CW. Kansas City DX Club’s annual competition at Dayton Hamvention confers bragging rights and a super prize to the winner.
6. QRQ conversations require only medium levels of accuracy as languages have redundancy that contributes to understanding. Fills are also acceptable. Conversation at 40 WPM and higher is usually sent by keyboard or computer generated files and with head copy.
7. CW for government agencies. Lots of this was done in previous times. The author is not qualified to comment in this area.

Only a few operators progress past #3 above but all are fun. Try and keep trying. Even at old age improvement can be achieved.

Most start off to send via a mechanical switch (key) to generate dits and dahs with the proper letter and word spacing. Most popular are straight keys, bugs in many forms and “cootie keys.”

Electronic keyers are a step between mechanical keys and automated sending. There are many variations on keyers but if a new CW operator is having a problem with a keyer, he should look into different types to find what works for him. [Also check out the various spacing modes offered by many keyers. – Ed.]

Pencil and paper is the starting point for copying CW. This can be debated as head copy is recommended by some. But “newbies” protest that they cannot initially remember what they have copied. Beyond 30 WPM the dexterity to write down what is heard limits hand copy. Typing skills push this limit and there is a record to be reviewed if needed. Head copy frees operators to get beyond the writing wall. Many just write down pertinent information and try to think through what is being copied. .

Comments and suggestions solicited to help Newcomers to the world of CW.

The Tokyo Ham Fair

Rob Brownstein K6RB

Here’s a trivia question for you: During our first year as a club, what two ham conventions had CWops booths? If you guessed Dayton, you’re right. But I bet most of you did not know that we also had a booth at the Tokyo Ham Fair. In fact, we have had booths at both Dayton and Tokyo for three years running!

One of my hot buttons has been trying to get more JA participation in CWops and CW Open. After all, Japan has one of the largest ham populations in the world, and those of you who participate in ARRL DX CW contest know that for many years the JAs have been stalwarts in that contest. So, I felt that with the right information and encouragement, we could attract more JAs to play in CW Open.

About six months ago I decided to pay my way to Tokyo (my first trip there) and help attend the booth at the Ham Fair. The timing was right, too, just one week before CW Open. We had sent out almost 230 invitations to JA contesters about six weeks ago, and just a week ago. So, I hoped to meet many potential players while I was at the fair in Tokyo.

Having attended Dayton for the last three years, I wondered how Tokyo Ham Fair would compare. So, here are my impressions:

The venue – Big Site – is near the water. It attracts about 10,000 attendees, according to Atsu. At Dayton, the aging of ham radio is very evident. One sees a lot of older folks, many of whom are riding around on motorized chairs. Here, in Tokyo, the average attendee age, I would estimate, is a good 15 years younger. There are no motorized chairs. I saw many people in their 30s, and a young guy (18 years old) earned an enviable 26 wpm in a Morse competition. Can we recruit him? He says he’ll take part in CW Open.

I also tried out for the CW competition, which fortunately was organized into age categories. I am now officially in the last category – 65 and older. I turn 67 in November. So, I entered the competition on Saturday and scored 48 wpm. Our JA member JA6AVO also entered and nailed 41 wpm. That put us both on the leader board in our age category – numbers one and two. I would periodically peek around the corner at that competition booth to see if my standing was still good as the competition continued. It ended Sunday at 3 PM, and I wound up winning an Olympic style gold medal in my age category. That CW competition booth was well attended throughout the two days. CW is alive and well in Japan. And one participant was only seven years old!

So far I feel as though my trip to Tokyo has been fruitful. The proof in the pudding, so to speak, will be an increase in JA membership and participation in CW Open. I plan to start my 0000Z CWO session with my antennas pointing at JA and my K3s watching 10, 15 and 20 meters. I hope those of you who can work JA at 0000Z on the high bands will be looking for them, too.

Photos:



Outside the ham fair at the Big Site in Tokyo. Note the towers and yagis near the center of the shot.



Atsu (JE1TRV) after we arrived. He drives a Nissan Leaf with a license plate 599 – how appropriate.

般部門 (18~64才)		シニア部門 (65才~)	
8		1 K6RB 48 7 12	
17		2 JA3AV0 41 7 13	
8	17 JM2LSJ 23 5 5	3 JA1JDN 32 5 11	17
14	18 JL1GEL 23 3 9	4 JA1AFF 28 4 10	18
9	19 JL3TOG 22 4 10		19
13	20 JH1BXZ 22 3 12		20
3	21 JF1CCH 21 2 5		21
13	22 N2QV 20 3 9		22
2	23 JJ0M0Y 17 2 9		23
15	24 JR2JMO 11 4 8		24
13			25
14			
26			

The CW competition leader board. Note that Number 1 and 2 in the 65 year and up category are both CWops members.



Rob and one of his new friends, an A1 Club member



Rob and Atsu JE1TRV



Left: JE1TRV, K6RB, JA1NUT. Right: A happy K6RB with his gold medal from the CW competition, having scored 48 wpm in callsign copying



CW Academy – Growing!

Rob Brownstein K6RB

The next semester of CW Academy is poised to begin in just days. The popularity of CW Academy has mushroomed to the point where we are filling up our courses two semesters in advance. Currently our Sep/Oct and Jan/Feb semesters are full, Apr/May is filling up quickly.

We have managed to get some new advisors into the core group and we are now handling about 60 students per semester (about 180 per year). We are always in need of more advisors, and advising is going to be easier than ever very soon. We are close to having a fully developed new tool that will allow our Level 1 students to practice both copying and sending in between online sessions. By the time the advisors meet with their students, they will be fully drilled on the letters, words, and call signs assigned to them. Therefore, we will truly be advisors rather than teachers.

We now have an active advisor in Australia and are working on creating a group of advisors in JA as well. We have had some success with advisors in Spain but we need to beef up our Europe operations. Right now, for example, Jack, W1WEF is advising a student in the Netherlands. We were lucky that the time skew could be accommodated...but we really need advisors in the EU time zones.

Get Ready for the
Third Annual
CW Open Event



- Date:** August 31 2013
- Times:** **Session 1:** 0000Z-0359Z, **Session 2:** 1200Z-1559Z and **Session 3:** 2000Z to 2359Z
- Bands:** 160 – 10 meters (no WARC), CW only
- Rules:** Work anyone, anywhere ONCE per band per session.
- Exchange:** serial number and name (e.g. 42 JOE)
- Scoring:** 1 point per valid QSO; 1 multiplier for each call sign worked – ONLY one time per session
- Logging:** Supported on N1MM, WriteLog, SD, Skookum, and many others
(see www.cwops.org/cwopen.html)
- Awards:** Each session is scored and awarded as a single contest; aggregate session scores are counted toward aggregate-score awards, too
- Teams:** Teams of up to 10 operators can be registered, before August 31, for a team competition
- Categories:** Single operator categories only – SOHP, SOLP and SOQRP. HP is more than 100w up to legal limit of operator's country; LP is more than 5 watts up to 100 watts; and QRP is 5 watts or less.
- Assisted:** Operators may use spotting, RBN. No self spotting. No multiop.
- Logs:** Separate logs must be submitted for each session of operation. Counts start over at 1 for each session.

CWT – The CWops Tests

By Hank Garretson

CWops Tests As Practice

Bill Myers, K1GQ, CWops 1130, is the author of [SkookumLogger](#), a full-featured contest logger for Macintosh computers. Bill is one of the most accomplished contest operators I know, and he is always looking for ways to improve.

For CWops Tests (but not the CW Open), Bill has disabled SkookumLogger's Super Check Partial and Call-History-File lookups, and any pre-fill from internal or external databases existing prior to the start of a given Test. This means that SL users actually have to copy what the other guy sends!

But wait, there's more! SL also has a Log-Checking-Report capability. After the contest, SkookumLogger compares your log to both Single Check Partial and the CWops Call History File and tells you how well or not so well you did.

And...there's even more! SL does pre-fill from prior QSOs in the current CWT log. So, if you get it wrong once and don't pay attention you will get hammered – just like in real life.

I think this is super. It's very easy to get complacent and overly reliant on crutches like SCP and call histories. Every once in a while, we should challenge ourselves and actually copy what's being sent.

SkookumLogger is the only contest logger I know of that has this feature. But even if you use some other contest logger, I encourage you to occasionally turn off SCP and pre-fill and see what happens. You have nothing to lose except perhaps some claimed QSOs, and your contest skills will surely improve.

CW Exuberantly,

Hank, W6SX

CWT Manager

From the VP – ACA/CMA Scores



<u>Call</u>	<u>ACA</u>	<u>CMA</u>
AA3B	474	3560
KZ5D*	446	2807
F6HKA*	419	1727
VE3KI	378	2024
K6RB	392	2051
W1RM*	345	2538
SM6CNN	333	2269
N5RR	317	2576
DL8PG*	312	1144
NN6T*	301	1001
EA8OM/DJ1OJ*	264	1722
W1UU	219	1250
WX7SJ*	208	328
N2UU*	206	1641
AD1C	202	963
W9ILY	188	1320
K6DGW*	172	1018
N1ZX*	166	619
PA7RA*	137	903
EA1WX	114	1206
W5ASP	51	418
W4VQ		1196

* = updated data

73, Art, KZ5D

The Annual Competition Award (ACA) is based on the number of members worked each calendar year. You get one point per member worked, once per year. It resets to zero at the beginning of each year. The Cumulative Member Award (CMA) is based on how many members you've worked since January 3, 2010 on

each band and continues to grow in perpetuity. The Cwops Award Manager (CAM) software, available at no cost, will help you keep track of your ACA and CMA totals.

From the Secretary – New Members



With great pleasure we welcome the following new members:

1200 JA3AVO Masumi
1201 NG7M* Max
1202 JL1GEL Aki
1203 K2CYE Mike
1204 JA1GQC* Kazu
1205 AF5DM Dave
1206 KI4XH Fred
1207 K6GVG* Roy
1208 WN4AFP Dave
1209 W6NWS Larry
1210 EA8BEX Manuel

* = Life Member

73,

Jim, N3JT

Current Nominees

As of August 28, ...

Need Sponsors: W4UM, RX6CB, WA4STO, W5APS, HA9RT

Invitations Extended: SM2LIY

For more details about nominees and status, check the “members only” on the Website: www.cwops.org

For information about joining CWops, check the Website under “membership.”

QTX Report

Enjoying the Art of Conversational CW

QTX is a program for members who enjoy casual CW QSOs. Anytime you have a QSO that goes over 20 minutes, jot down the call sign of the other station, and before the 5th of the next month, go to the website QTX page in the Members Only section and put in your total.

Here are the QTX results for July 2013. Total QSOs were up 32 from June. Reporting stations were down 2.

With the warm summer weather there is still a lot of activity from conversational CW these days. Here are the folks who spent time on the CW bands making friends and reported their activity to the club:

<u>Call</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>CY2013</u>
N6TT	54	359
N5IR	46	263
K5LY	46	149
K4AHO	34	187
WB6BEE	34	34
NN6T	31	238
K5KV	24	100
K6RB	21	61
N4SR	20	47
N1ZX	18	58
KE6OIO	15	58
N5RR	12	38
WA3NZR	11	121
WA8IWK	9	38
JE1TRV	8	74
K0DTJ	5	61
K6HTN	5	21

N3IQ	4	26
AA5SR		150
K6RQT		15
K8QI		36
HB9CVQ		8
G4CPA		4
W5JQ		16
W4VQ		2
DL8PG		4
VE7ALQ		53
W6JMP		9
K2XX		1
W1UU		7
N1DG		2

2013 personal bests this month for N5IR (46), K5LY (46), K4AHO (34), K6RB (21), N4SR (20), KE6OIO (15), N5RR (12), WA8IWK (9). Congratulations!

You can submit your August total by September 5th to
<http://www.cwops.org/members/qtxmo.html>

Thanks to all for your participation.

73,

John K1ESE, CWops #792

-30-