



TALES FROM THE SWAMP

April 2020

Author: Kevan Nason, N4XL

New Kid Needed:

We still do not have a President. It isn't fair to Dave, WN4AFP, to carry the load. Isn't there someone in our group who will step up and help carry the load?

Thank you to our current group leadership

Interim President and VP - Dave, WN4AFP dave@pkministrywebs.com

Treasurer – Phil, NI7R ni7r45b@gmail.com

Secretary – Bill, N4IQ bill.n4iq@charter.net

From the Reflector:

- Matt, NU4E, and Bill, N4IQ, spent some time together using antenna modeling techniques to come up with a T-antenna design to help Matt with his portable operations. Matt's great results speak for both the success of their work and Matt's operating skills.
- Dave's, WN4AFP, efforts at getting the State QSO Party challenge going are paying off. Ed, K3DNE, is still in the top 10 according to the 3830 results, but says he is falling behind and needs some more BIC time to be competitive. See how folks are doing on the 3830 web page. Scan down the page a bit to the "Special Summaries" section Bruce has created to see where everyone is standing.



- Ed, K3DNE, forwarded a posting from W3IDT about proposed VHF rule changes. VHF contesting hasn't been particularly popular with the SFCG membership. If you have any interest I'm sure Ed would love to talk about it. (Although not from the reflector I'll add that with the summer months

Contest Tips:

K1AR Contest Tips

- 06- How's your Spanish? If you are like me, you know most of the numbers and can "fake" your callsign. With that knowledge, you can be amazingly effective at calling CQ with the beam South during slow hours and work an remarkable number of casual QSOs (and passable mults) to the South. Try it ... as of late, it's never been better!
- 07- Does the physical size of your QTH limit you from erecting 500+ foot beverages? I have discovered that there are times when existing antennas can enhance receiving quality on 80 and 160 Meters. For example, try using your 40 meter antenna on 80 or 160 as a receive array. If stations are loud enough, improved signal-to-noise ratios can more than compensate for reduced signal strength levels and heighten your ability to copy low-band signals - - without a beverage!
- 13- Do you recall the painful experience of having a beautiful QSO run disappear almost instantly? Many times it's nothing more than the band changing. However, it can be often the result of a QRM caused by a station you can't hear. An open frequency does not always mean it is QRM-free on the other end. Try asking the question: "How clear is my frequency on your side?"

Some folks are actually able to work the entire 48 hours of a major contest. I don't want to that so never will. You are probably the same. However, I do want to maximize the time I can am on. You won't likely win or place near the top of a competitive category in the CQWW or ARRL DX if you don't spend over 30 hours in the chair. Reading what people had to say about how to last 48 hours has given me some ideas of how to do keep my behind in the chair longer even though I have no intention of doing the entire 48. Here's what EI8IC has posted on his web site about that.

=====

The following techniques have been recommended by experienced contesters writing to the CQ Contest Reflector. All credit goes to the writers of these articles.



From Randy, K5ZD

Yes, it is possible to operate for 48 hours without any sleep! But it is hard. Some suggestions:-
You must want to do it very badly. This is the only thing that will keep you going after 36 hours!

- Get as much sleep as possible BEFORE the contest. I try to sleep extra hours each night for the 7 days before the contest.
 - You must want to do it very badly.
 - Exercise. Being in good shape will help.
 - You must want to do it very badly.
 - Eat well during the contest. There are many different diets. For me, low sugar and very little caffeine until day 2.
 - You must want to do it very badly.
- Good luck!



From Jim, K4OJ

I have always viewed this as the make or breaker for the winner of CQWW and the other big time contests....

In addition to having mastered one's station and propagation to win, one must also master their body...pre contest training and close scrutiny of what you eat both before and after the contest are added to the superior operating abilities of the winners. Stories of what kind of food to eat to minimize side effects of sleep deprivation have been placed on this reflector before....the link to a newspaper article about how NATO pilots do it is I think was the most fascinating stuff I have seen on this reflector!

I personally have never been able to do it - I have come close a few times but those times are getting to be longer and longer ago...

I think this is the final hurdle...if you have mastered propagation and know when to be where and you have sharpened your operating skills to both run and S&P effectively, well what is left...maximizing your on air time...to those who iron man it, I say well done - and congratulations. Your focus on the entire commitment to winning is clear - yes, lots of us are only able to operate "most" of the contest but this little difference as they say is what separates da men from da boyz.

Note - you must have an employer who grants you the following Monday off from work to pull this one off! CRASH!!!!!!



From Bob, AA0CY

Because, according to the experts, the body's sleep cycles come in 90-minute increments, you should take contest sleep breaks in the same ratios. I believe two increments should be the minimum, for a total of 3 hours. That seems to work very well for me, and I'm on the wrong side of 50; although I haven't contested, seriously or otherwise, for the past three years.

There are some experts who say you can use "half-increments," or 45-minute breaks or multiples thereof.

The effects of sleep deprivation and "jet lag" can be mitigated somewhat by what foods and drink are consumed, starting maybe a week before. Caffeine is one of the definite "no-no's," or at least should be used only toward the end.



From John, K4BAI/8P9HT

The last time I did 48-hours straight was last CQWW CW at age 58. The next time I will try it will be this CQ WW CW at age 59 (both at 8P9Z).

I doubt that age has much to do with it. The first time I did 48 hours straight was in 1987 at age 45. It was suggested at a forum at the ARRL National Convention in Houston by Dick, N6AA. I had not seriously considered it before. The most I had previously done was in CQ WW CW in 1980 from PJ2CC which was about 46 hours. In 1985, I did CQ WW CW from 4V2C (Haiti) and slept only 20 minutes. Since that year, every year I have been in the Caribbean single op, I have done the whole 48 hours without sleep.

I find it almost impossible to sleep the daytime preceding the contest. The contest starts at 8 PM, so I am actually up about 60 hours straight. I do REST on the afternoon before the contest, but can't seem to relax enough to actually sleep.

Actually, older age may be a positive factor rather than negative, as long as one is in good health. We seem to require less sleep as we get older and we are able to condition ourselves (or practice makes perfect). I used to have hallucinations similar to those described by others, but they have not been noticed in recent years.

Actually, I think a 2 hour nap during the wee hours of the second night would probably be beneficial to most operators, including myself. But, I am generally at a place totally alone, with only an alarm clock to wake me. My concern is that I might lie down for a quick nap and wake up 6 hours later as others have described doing (W2GD?).

This is not to say that I operate the 48 hours without a break except for a dash to the refrigerator and bathroom. I nearly always take a hot shower and some years shave during the wee hours of the second night. Last year, I had a rig failure just before that planned shower break and decided to skip it after taking too much time to get the backup equipment on line, but was almost out on my feet and actually took the shower break during the Caribbean morning Europe opening. After that break, I was good to go for the rest of the contest.

By the way, I have actually gone to sleep standing up operating CW with the headphones on. I fell onto the floor and woke up then. But that was at TGOAA in 1967, when I was 25 years old, hi.

So, what I am saying in a round about way is not to let age discourage you if you are in good health. And experience will probably lead to more success each year.



From John, P40A

I also have trouble sleeping before a contest. I usually spend Friday afternoon walking on the beach and having a few brews and if I'm lucky I can sleep for an hour or two. The few times I've tried to stay awake as long as possible, haven't been able to make it through the Sunday morning hallucinations. There comes a point that I don't know what I'm doing or why. Usually things are slow then anyway and I take a nap. I'm afraid of being in worse shape when the bands pick up again. Do the hallucinations stop and do you start to feel better when the sun comes out even with no sleep?



From Leigh, KR6X

48 hour DX contest operations are a reality for some. I was able to put in that kind of effort in my mid 20's. The first 30 hours is a piece of cake if you get some sleep right before the contest begins. The last 18 hours of the contest I often experienced some of my worst delusory or hallucinatory periods, but there were also some short moments of lucidity. Caffeine can help you keep awake, but one of my ARRL DX contest operations taught me to:

- 1) use caffeine lightly and only approximately in the last 18 hours, don't start early.
- 2) don't drive home from a guest operator position before sleeping.

And then my best suggestion is to get about 2 hours of sleep at around the 30 hour point. Any contacts lost by being off the air for a rest will be compensated more than adequately by improved operator efficiency in the last 16 hours.



From Stewart, GM4AFF/GM0F

My favourite subject! Here's a repeat of the information I gathered a few years ago when we had a similar thread. It might be helpful to some. Apologies to those who have seen it before (I have modified it slightly)...

There is no doubt that the human metabolism will function better over a 48 hour period of little sleep, if attention is paid to fitness and diet. Diet seems to have the most obvious and immediate effect on the ability to last the 48 hour period.

1. It's a proven medical fact that we should sleep in multiples of 90 minutes. Most sleep 90 mins on early Sunday morning, and some on Saturday morning too. In general, it seems like a good idea to get 3 hours in before the contest starts, which is easy in Europe, but difficult in West USA. Varied feelings about whether to get 'lie in' on the Friday morning, but certainly not good to have a very late night on Thursday. 'Adrenelin' seems to be a big factor for some in keeping you going through the weekend. For others, the opposite is true - relaxed and laid-back gets them through. Whether you're wired or tired, it makes little difference to the final result. It's the ability to sustain concentration that matters.

2. Drink in moderation, but regularly. Drink to quench thirst. Do not drink caffeinated beverages. Caffeine will lower the blood sugar level thereby affecting the ability to concentrate. Coke, tea and coffee contain caffeine. Milk will make talking difficult - radio and TV news readers avoid milk. Unsweetened fruit juice, a little often, is good. It is far more difficult to waken up if you have managed to get to sleep with a high caffeine level.

3. When to eat? Stick to eating at regular intervals. Every 6 hours with a small snack at 3hr intervals is good. Normal eating times are also good. It's what your body expects.

4. What to eat? The objective is to maintain a steady blood-glucose level of around 4-5 mmol throughout the weekend, with a slightly higher than normal intake of protein. In normal healthy individuals, high blood-glucose levels lead to poor concentration and drowsiness whilst low blood-glucose levels lead to irritability, short temper and loss of aptitude. 4-5 mmol, a moderately low level, will be achieved by avoiding anything containing simple carbohydrates like sugar or bleached pure white flour. So, good is wholemeal bread, bad is plain white bread. Good is potato skins, bad is creamed potato. Good is natural fruit juices, bad is sports drinks. Good is fruit, bad is sweets/candy. Whilst sports drinks will give the body a big hit of energy, this hit is followed by a very deep low in blood-glucose levels. Complex carbohydrates (vegetables, fruits and grains) are good, in that they take a long time to digest, help maintain a steady blood-glucose level and help avoid surges.

So what should we eat and drink?

- sandwiches of wholemeal bread, with meat or cheese
- fruit/grain/granola bars (but watch out for high sugar content)
- pure orange juice
- water
- nuts
- apples

5. How much to eat? In general, it is best to eat less food than you would normally.

6. Avoid smoking.

7. Keep fit. This is really quite important. If you are fit your body will react less badly to poor sleep patterns.

8. Avoid alcohol.

9. Avoid working on 'stuff' right up to the wire. Prepare well for the contest and 'know' that you have. There is a hidden side to knowing that you are well prepared. This will help you relax prior to and during the event, which is one of the keys to making it through the full 48 hours. It feels good to feel loud, and believe that your signal is getting through - 'I know what I'm doing'. Learn from the previous year. Immediately after a major contest write down what was wrong, what went wrong, what was good, and what was bad. That way, next year you will be a little more prepared, and a little more relaxed.

10. Smile when you talk. Sound happy. Even if you feel like death, don't let the other guy know it! People like to call happy people. Not a lot of good on CW, of course.

Other points worth noting...

Vitamin B can help you feel less tired over a period of time, and may be beneficial. I would not take this as a recommendation to take vitamins though - see your doctor first!

Tablets/medication like ProPlus (in the UK) which are really just concentrated caffeine, will keep you awake but your ability to make even the simplest decision is diminished, and concentration is virtually impossible. Trouble is, I don't think you are aware of this if you have taken them! Perhaps, useful in the last 12 hours.

Someone suggested avoiding salt, but this may not be recommended in hot climates, as lack of salt can lead to muscle cramps. It's unlikely that the lack or even overdose of salt over such a short time frame would have that much effect anyway.

A number of ops mentioned feeling rough for the whole of the week following a contest. I didn't after the CQ WW SSB, but did after the CW. And I haven't felt bad like this before - I recover fairly quickly normally. I don't know what this is all about.

Some ops mentioned a lack of aptitude - the inability to physically send certain complex CW codes. This is probably due to low blood-glucose levels and lack of sleep. The inability to receive more than 3 or 4 characters at a time seems to result from high blood-glucose levels and lack of sleep. What to do? Sleep, I guess!

I believe a shower and shave will work wonders on Sunday morning. [Put some clean clothes out beforehand - EI8IC]

I was told that pineapple juice is a lot better at refreshing you than orange. I tried this, and it seems to be true. It's also less acidic I think, and orange juice can be a migraine trigger.

Essential oils may have a beneficial effect, but leave the shack smelling for weeks afterwards!

I don't want to sound like an expert. I'm not a dietitian. I'm not a top-flight operator. But I am diabetic (insulin dependent), and hence, have a requirement to keep my blood-glucose level under control. I made some fundamental mistakes in the last CQ WW CW Contest (1999), and I am passing on what I have learnt, both from personal experience and from the experience of others. I hope others can benefit from this.

Observations by the Editor:

1. Ed, K3DNE, has expressed an interest in VHF+ contesting a couple times now. There hasn't been much interest expressed by the SFCG membership, but if you have the inclination to dabble a bit I'm sure Ed would be happy to talk about it. It's also a good time of year to be thinking about it with sporadic-E popping up in the summer months. From the SCDXA reflector I learned there is a group headed up by Gary, K9RX, who is located in Piedmont, SC, that are right now (4/21/2020) planning a purchase of material needed to manufacture 3 element 6 meter yagis. They are cutting costs by using group purchasing power. Think they are looking at a cost of around \$109. If you act quickly you might be able to jump on their band wagon. Original cost was expected to be around \$80, but in the last few weeks Gary found the cost of aluminum has jumped 80%. Probably from interrupted supply chains due to Covid-19. He also mentioned Cushcraft is selling a 3 element 6 meter beam for \$140. I would expect its cost to be going up because of increased material costs soon too. So if you have an interest in a new antenna you might consider getting it now.
2. Some of us have begun exploring the voice keying capabilities of N1MM. If you aren't yet using it you should be aware it can help save your voice whether Running or doing S&P.
3. Ed, K3DNE, found he had a problem during the NA Sprint. He had four QP log's open at the same time as his Sprint log and his computer couldn't keep up with everything. N1MM is good, but there are limitations.
4. It was good to see postings from Ted, K7OM, and Frank, KG4IGC, this past month. We know there has been a lot going on in their lives. Hope they enjoyed their BIC time.
5. There have been many meetings, hamfests, and event cancellations due to Covid-19. This year's Dayton Hamvention Contest University will be held online this year. Don't know if they are full or not but register early if you want it live. Sessions will be posted for those of us who did not log on during the actual event.
6. Is there anyone in the group besides Bill, N4IQ, and I that are using TS590's? We privately exchange information about them now and then and could include you too. I don't see much chatter about things like that from our group. If you have a question about your rig and ask a rig specific reflector be sure to speak out here on the SFCG groups.io too and let others in the group know what problems you are having with your IC7600, K3, or whatever. Let others know what rig you use. That way you can help each other keep abreast of things.

N1MM+ Tips:

N1MM F-key and Macro use

Although it's likely some old school contesters might not be familiar with N1MM's F-Key messages, it's safe to say almost everyone who uses N1MM takes advantage of them to send messages so I'll assume you are already familiar with them. That being the case most are aware of the F-key format to send your call or exchange generally look like this:

F4 N4XL,N4XL for CW/ RTTY/Digital or F4 N4XL,N4XL.wav for SSB

But by using that format if you wanted to use the SFCG call of WW4SF for the SCQP you would have to change N4XL to WW4SF everywhere it appears in your files. Editing is also required every time you work a contest with a different exchange than the last time you loaded a F-Key file. Sure, you could save a file for each contest and call it up for the next one. That's how I've been doing things for a few years. But N1MM uses special character symbols and has macro commands that can make your F-key file more standard from contest to contest. Standardization means less work and fewer mistakes. I'm changing my F-key files to standardize them and if you haven't yet done that you should consider it too. standardization won't free you from editing things from time to time, but it can cut down on it.

When you open a new contest file using a different call tell N1MM in the Station Data section what call you are using. If you are a multi-operator entry you will also tell it what operator is on by using the CTRL+O command. Instead of using the examples for sending your call above you might consider these instead:

For CW try F4 {MYCALL},{MYCALL}

For SSB try F4 {MYCALL},{MYCALL}.wav

I put my WW4SF wav files in a separate folder so need to specify where to find them. I could do that by typing this in the file F4 WW4SF,WW4SF\WW4SF.wav, but instead do this:

F4 {MYCALL},{OPERATOR}\{MYCALL}.WAV

I also sometimes use the call WJ4X so by doing it that way I don't have to change my F-key files. Just by entering the call I am using for the contest into the Station Data N1MM finds and uses the right .wav files. You might have to play around a bit to get the right combination of things to make it work for your situation.

Here's a couple other examples of standardizing things

F2 EXCH,(EXCH)

F5 HisCall,!

Here's Bill's F-key file for the BARTG RTTY contest. It uses the current time as part of the QSO exchange. Rather than type it in each contact he lets N1MM pull it automatically from his PC. Bill shared his Run and S&P files. Although I often keep mine the same, there are times to make them different.

BARTG RTTY Run Messages	
F1 CQ,{ENTER} BARTG N4IQ N4IQ BARTG{ENTER}{CLEARIT}{RX}	{ENTER} PROVIDES A LINE FEED TO CLEAR THE DECODE WINDOW (REDUCES VIEWED TRASH). {ENTER} ALSO PUTS THE RADIO IN TRANSMIT.
	{CLEARIT} REMOVES ANY RIT OFFSET FROM PREVIOUS CONTACT.
	{RX} PLACES THE RADIO IN RECEIVE. .

F2 Exch,599 -#-#{TIME2}-{TIME2}- !{ENTER}{RX}	{TIME2] SENDS THE CURRENT TIME. CURRENT TIME IS A REQUIRED PART OF THE EXCHANGE
F3 Tu, {ENTER} TU N4IQ BARTG {ENTER}{RX}{CLEARRRIT}{RUN}	
F4 MYCALL,{ENTER} * {ENTER}{RX}	SENDS MY CALL
F5 His Cl,{ENTER}!	SENDS HIS CALL
F6 Cl?,{ENTER} CALL? {ENTER}{RX}	
F7 Agn,{ENTER}AGN?{ENTER}{RX}	
F8 Nr?,{ENTER}NR NR?{ENTER}{RX}	
F9 Time?,{ENTER}TIME TIME?{ENTER}{RX}	
F10 MyNr,{ENTER} #-#-#{ENTER}{RX}	SENDS MY SERIAL NUMBER
F11 MyTme,{ENTER} {TIME2}-{TIME2}-{TIME2}- {ENTER}{RX}	
F12 Wipe,{CLEARRRIT}{WIPE}	CLEAR THE RIT AND THEN WIPES THE ENTRY FIELDS
BARTG RTTY S&P Messages	
F1 CQ,{ENTER} BARTG N4IQ N4IQ BARTG{ENTER}{CLEARRRIT}{RX}	
F2 Exch,>{ENTER}! TU 599 -#-#{TIME2}-{TIME2}- * {Enter}{RX}	
F3 Tu,{ENTER} TU * {ENTER}{RX}{CLEARRRIT}	
F4 {MYCALL},{ENTER} * * * {ENTER}{RX}	
F5 His Cl,{ENTER} !	
F6 Cl?,{ENTER} CALL? {ENTER}{RX}	
F7 Agn?,{ENTER}AGN? {ENTER}{RX}	
F8 Nr?,{ENTER} NR NR?{ENTER}{RX}	
F9 Time?,{ENTER}TIME Time?{ENTER}{RX}	
F10 MyNr,{ENTER} #-#-#{ENTER}{RX}	
F11 MyTme,{ENTER} -{TIME2}-{TIME2}-{TIME2}- {ENTER}{RX}	
F12 Wipe,{CLEARRRIT}{WIPE}	CLEAR THE RIT AND THEN WIPES THE ENTRY FIELDS

I know I said I'm changing to standardized files, but here's an older F-key file of mine from the SCQP. (I'm not happy with this and will change it.) Included it here as a simpler example of how to set things up for those who haven't yet explored making their own files.

SCQP Run	
F1 CQ,CQ Contest - N4XL.wav	<p>WHEN I PRESS F1 THE RADIO:</p> <p>1) SHIFTS TO TRANSMIT MODE</p> <p>2)CALLS UP AND PLAYS THE .WAV FILE CALLED "CQ CONTEST - N4XL.WAV". THE FILE IS FOUND IN THE DEFAULT LOCATION SINCE NO DIRECTORY SPECIFYING AN ALTERNATE LOCATION IS SPECIFIED</p>
F2 Exch,59sugarcharlie.wav	<p>1) FOR THE SCQP THE EXCHANGE IS ALWAYS THE SAME SO I RECORDED THE AUDIO FOR THE EXCHANGE IN A FILE CALLED "59sugarcharlie.wav"</p> <p>2) IF THIS WAS THE CQWW SSB CONTEST THERE WOULD BE NO WAVE FILE. HOWEVER, IF YOU LEFT THE F2 MACRO LINE OUT THEN N1MM WOULD GET CONFUSED. YOU NEED TO HAVE A MACRO LINE FOR EVERY F-KEY WHETHER OR NOT YOU USE IT OR NOT IN ORDER FOR N1MM TO ASSOCIATE THE CORRECT MACRO TO CORRECT F-KEY. MY MACROS FOR CONTESTS USING SEQUENTIAL SERIAL NUMBERS LOOK LIKE THIS: F2 Exch,</p>
F3 TNX,TU-N4XL.wav	THIS .WAV FILE SENDS "THANKS N4XL"
F4 N4XL,N4XL.wav	
F5 His Call,	I VOICE THE OTHER STATIONS CALL RATHER THAN LETTING IT SOUND LIKE A ROBOT. THERE MUST BE A MACRO LINE HERE FOR F5 TO KEEP THE OTHER FILES CORRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE RIGHT F-KEY
F6 SC,SC.wav	SENDS "SIERRA CHARLIE"
F7 QRZ?,QRZ.wav	THIS IS LEFT OVER FROM OLD DAYS. I DON'T USE IT ANYMORE. I SIMPLY SAY "QRZ" IF NEEDED AND NOW EITHER LEAVE THIS F-KEY BLANK OR USE IT FOR SOMETHING ELSE
F8 AGN?,AGN AGN.wav	SENDS "AGAIN AGAIN"
F9 RRR,RRR.wav	SENDS "ROGER ROGER ROGER"

F10 CQ A1,CQ Alt - N4XL.wav	1) USED TO SEND A DIFFERENT SOUNDING CQ FILE TO BREAK UP THE MONOTONY. 2) I OFTEN USE A COMMAND TO VARY THE CQ MESSAGE IN THE F1 SLOT. SEE TEXT BELOW
F11 CQ A2,{operator}\cq1.wav	THIS IS A SECOND DIFFERENT SOUNDING CQ .WAV FILE. NOTICE THE FILE PATH BEFORE THE .WAV FILE NAME. IF YOU ARE IN A MULTI-OP SITUATION EACH OP CAN RECORD THEIR OWN .WAV FILES. WHEN A NEW OP COMES TAKES OVER HE TELLS N1MM HIS CALL SIGN USING CTRL+O. THE {OPERATOR} DESIGNATOR IN THIS MACRO TELLS N1MM TO PULL THE CQ1.WAV FILE FOUND IN THE .WAV FILE SUB-FOLDER FOR THE OPERATOR N1MM HAS AS BEING ACTIVE. NOT REALLY NEEDED FOR A SINGLE OP STATION, BUT I SOMETIMES USE WW4SF OR WJ4X FOR SSB CONTESTS SO THIS CAN BE USEFUL IN A SINGLE OP STATION TOO.
F12 Wipe,{WIPE}	CTRL+W WIPES WHATEVER YOU MIGHT HAVE ENTERED INTO THE ENTRY WINDOW FIELDS. {WIPE} DOES THE SAME THING. RATHER THAN PUSHING TWO KEYS TO WIPE THE FIELDS I CAN JUST PUSH F12 TO CLEAR THE FIELDS.

I've found that some people like change. I sometimes call CQ using the same audio file three times in a row and then switch it to a different sounding CQ. I seem to get a slightly higher percentage of answers by casual contesters right after that change. N1MM has a macro command to do switch automatically. To change it up after three times and play a different CQ on the fourth time I use this command.

F1 CQ,{VARYMSG1&CQ N4XL.wav&\CQ1 N4XL.wav&4&}

Note: If you used more than one VARYMSG in your macro file you would change The "1" in VARYMSG1 to "2" for the second VARYMSG command -- as in {VARYMSG2& CQ...}

Some Runners do not say their call after every QSO. They say it after every third QSO. They could record two "Thanks" .wav files. One saying just "Thanks" and the other saying "Thanks N4XL". Then they could put this in their macro file:

F3 TU,{VARYMSG2&Thanks.wav&ThanksN4XL.wav&2&}

I just set this up in my CW Run message file for use in the Michigan QP. Note how every fourth CQ plays the alternate CQ message in F11 instead of the "normal" CQ MiQP message. I also put a standard

straight forward CQ in the file so if I decide to switch CQ types all I have to do is put a # symbol in front of the first F1 line and remove it from the second line.

```
F1 CQ,{VARYMSG1&Cq MiQP {MYCALL}&{F11}&4&}{CLEARRIT}
#F1 CQ,Cq MiQP {MYCALL}{CLEARRIT}
F2 Exch,{EXCH}
F3 Tu,Tu {MYCALL}{CLEARRIT}
F4 {MYCALL},{MYCALL}
F5 His,!
F6 Exch,{EXCH}
F7 SC,SC SC
F8 ?,??
F9 Nr?,Nr?
F10 Cty?,Cty?
F11 CQ-A,Cq Mi Mi {MYCALL}{CLEARRIT}
F12 Wipe,{WIPE}
```

Bill doesn't like using .wav files stored on his computer for SSB contests. Instead he uses the four voice memories in his TS590's to record key audio messages and then tells N1MM to send messages stored in a specific TS590 voice memory slot instead of finding a .wav file on his computer. Here's how he does that for his rig. (If you don't have a TS590 your ascii command structure will be different and you'll have to figure out how to make it work for you.)

N4IQ CQ WPX SSB	
F1 CQ,{CATA1ASC PB1;}{CATA2ASC PB1;}	{CATA1ASC PB1;} = SENDS KENWOOD VOICE MEMORY PUSH BUTTON 1 ON RADIO 1 {CATA2ASC PB1;} = SENDS KENWOOD VOICE (MEMORY PUSH BUTTON 1 ON RADIO 2 ONLY THE FOCUS RADIO MESSAGE IS SENT
F2 REPRT,{CATA1ASC PB2;}{CATA2ASC PB2;}	
F3 TU,{CATA1ASC PB3;}{CATA2ASC PB3;}{CLEARRIT}	
F4 N4IQ,{CATA1ASC PB4;}{CATA2ASC PB4;}	
F5 -,	
F6 -,	
F7 -,	
F8 -,	
F9 -,	
F10 -,	
F11 Stop, {CATA1ASC PB0;}{CATA2ASC PB0;}	

12 Wipe, {CLEARRIT}{WIPE}	
	THESE ARE THE RECORDED MESSAGES: PB1 TEST N4IQ N4IQ PB2 599 (THEN VOICE THE SERIAL NUMBER) PB3 THANKS N4IQ PB4 N4IQ

I looked through the macro commands used by N1MM and came up with this list of things I think people might find worth looking at a bit closer. I can see myself using any of these when a particular contest presented an opportunity for them to prove useful. Some are general use. Others are for SO2R operations and still others could be used to automate messaging to pass a station to another frequency when a rarer mult answers your CQ. You'll have to look at each one in the documentation before using them because after making this list I tried to use one for my MiQP CW messages. It didn't work and when troubleshooting I discovered some of these only work in digital modes. Oops.

@ To voice the current receive frequency (Think using for split operation)

{CALL} Sends the previous or uncorrected call from the Callsign field of the Entry window

{GRID} Gridsquare from Station info dialog

{GRIDSQUARE} Gridsquare from grid textbox (contact in Entry window)

{MYCALL} My Call from Station info dialog

{OTHERFREQ} Is replaced by the frequency of the non-active radio

{PGDN} Change frequency up

{PGUP} Change frequency down

{QTC} Sends the TU message after a block of QTCs has been completed

{LRMHZ} Frequency Left Radio/VFO-A in MHz

{RRMHZ} Frequency Right Radio/VFO-B in MHz

{STEREOOFF} Sets stereo audio OFF

{STEREON} Sets stereo audio ON

{CLEARRIT} Reset the RIT to zero

{TIME2} Short GMT time (hhmm) format

{SENTRSTCUT} Sends the RST of the current contact using cut format

{F1} - {F12} Sends function keys F1 through F12

{VARYMSG1} {VARYMSG2} A method for sending alternating function key messages

{CAT1ASC} {CAT2ASC} Sends ASCII commands to radios 1 and 2

{NAME} Sends the name as entered in the Entry Window name field

{OPERATOR} Used to specify different wav files for each operator, to prevent confusion caused by having recorded wav files in a different voice than the operator's voice using the microphone. Let each

operator have his own WAV files Wave file name, e.g.: {OPERATOR}\cq.wav {OPERATOR} is a string substitution that is only implemented for SSB messages

! - Send his call. The callsign entered in the callsign entry field will be sent by the soundcard. The location of the letter and number files used to make up his call sign is set up in the Configurer under the Files tab. All of the WAV files for the letters/numbers etc. must be present in that folder.

{OTHERMHZ} Sends the frequency of the other (inactive) VFO/radio

{JUMPRX} Changes the RX focus to the other input window

{JUMPRXTX} Changes both the RX and TX focus to the other input window

{WIPE} Wipes the focus window

{CTRLFX} Sends on the other radio

{QSYCQ} QSY to the last focus radio CQ frequency

{CONDJUMP} Shifts focus and sends CW message when not split

{TX} Start transmission in the digital interfaces (needed to transmit!) Needed at the beginning of every Digital macro!

{RX} Switch to receive in the digital interfaces (needed to get back to receive). Needed at the end of every Digital macro!

{CLRRX} Clear the RX window. This macro can be used either alone or after an {END} macro.

{CLRTX} Clear the TX window.

There are many others. Try some out to power charge your F-key files.

Upcoming Contests: Including VHF/UHF

See WA7BNM. I will mention Dave's, WN4AFP, effort to get the State QSO Party Challenge up and running is going very well.

SFOTA Current Leaderboard <http://www.sfota.com/>

2020 OVERALL STANDINGS						
CALL	Contests	CW QSO'S	SSB QSO'S	DIGITAL QSO'S	RTTY QSO'S	TOTAL QSO'S
1) N4IQ	27	2374	1292	395	2021	6082
2) K3DNE	23	0	5641	0	0	5641
3) WB4HRL	73	2664	1100	0	1459	5223
4) WN4AFP	45	2649	1039	0	640	4328
5) NU4E	8	950	1576	0	737	3263
6) KG6MC	10	1019	1134	0	0	2153
7) N4XL	11	1004	824	0	0	1828
8) K7OM	10	578	180	0	1049	1807
9) NI7R	17	1359	58	0	313	1730
10) KG4IGC	3	245	0	0	662	907
11) KS4YX	8	419	55	7	404	885
12) NJ4F	3	50	0	0	779	829
13) WU0B	1	0	358	0	0	358
14) AJ4UQ	2	0	0	6	61	67

2020 INDIVIDUAL MODE STANDINGS							
CALL	CW QSO'S	CALL	SSB QSO'S	CALL	DIGITAL QSO'S	CALL	RTTY QSO'S
WB4HRL	2664	K3DNE	5641	N4IQ	395	N4IQ	2021
WN4AFP	2649	NU4E	1576	KS4YX	7	WB4HRL	1459
N4IQ	2374	N4IQ	1292	AJ4UQ	6	K7OM	1049
NI7R	1359	KG6MC	1134			NJ4F	779
KG6MC	1019	WB4HRL	1100			NU4E	737
N4XL	1004	WN4AFP	1039			KG4IGC	662
NU4E	950	N4XL	824			WN4AFP	640
K7OM	578	WU0B	358			KS4YX	404
KS4YX	419	K7OM	180			NI7R	313
KG4IGC	245	NI7R	58			AJ4UQ	61
NJ4F	50	KS4YX	55				

3830 Activity:

(Activity from the last 30 days postings on 3830scores.com where postings listed club affiliation as being SFCG. The list does not include the CWOPS mini-tests)

144SprngSprnt				
4/11/2020 11:06	NU4E	Single Op	LP	48
BARTG				
3/24/2020 0:40	K7OM	SOAB	HP	100,400
3/22/2020 23:48	KS4YX	SOAB-6	LP	10,150
3/23/2020 0:42	N4IQ	SOAB	HP	613,440
3/24/2020 22:06	WB4HRL	SOAB-6	LP	13,284
CQMM DX				
4/19/2020 3:31	N4IQ	SOAB	HP	130,096
4/21/2020 11:51	WB4HRL	SOAB	HP	5,472

EA RTTY				
4/7/2020 0:59	K7OM	SOAB	HP	11,396
4/5/2020 20:26	KG4IGC	SOAB	LP	14,964
4/5/2020 16:47	N4IQ	SOAB	HP	14,661
Gagarin DX				
4/15/2020 1:26	K7OM	SOAB	HP	8,404
GaQP				
4/12/2020 12:54	AC4MC	M/S	HP	1,620
	(@AC4MC)			
4/12/2020 16:37	K3DNE	Single OpSSB	HP	2,176
4/13/2020 1:37	NI7R	Single OpCW	HP	1,540
4/12/2020 17:48	WB4HRL	Single OpMixed	HP	2,139
4/12/2020 4:17	WN4AFP	Single OpMixed	LP	3,952
LaQP				
4/6/2020 3:21	K3DNE	Fixed SSB	HP	50
4/7/2020 20:55	WB4HRL	Fixed Mixed	HP	120
4/5/2020 16:54	WN4AFP	Fixed CW/Dig	LP	1,124
MiQP				
4/19/2020 12:44	K3DNE	Single Op	HP	1,988
4/19/2020 3:58	N4XL	Single Op	LP	12,426
4/21/2020 11:18	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	72
4/19/2020 21:38	WN4AFP	Single Op	LP	6,302
MoQP				
4/6/2020 3:33	K3DNE	SO Fixed	HP	589
4/10/2020 2:58	NI7R	SO Fixed	HP	132
4/7/2020 20:21	WB4HRL	SO Fixed	HP	268
4/5/2020 20:09	WN4AFP	SO Fixed	LP	2,014
MSQP				
4/6/2020 3:25	K3DNE	Single Op	HP	63
4/10/2020 2:56	NI7R	Single Op	HP	53
4/8/2020 11:03	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	207
4/5/2020 17:02	WN4AFP	Single Op	LP	752

NA Sprint SSB				
4/5/2020 4:12	K3DNE	Single Op	HP	9,604
4/5/2020 4:07	N4IQ	Single Op	HP	10,706
4/5/2020 12:52	NU4E	Single Op	LP	9,620
NCCC RY-Sprint				
4/17/2020 2:22	N4IQ	Single Op	LP	448
4/10/2020 2:21	N4IQ	Single Op	LP	319
4/3/2020 2:20	N4IQ	Single Op	LP	494
NDQP				
4/12/2020 16:41	K3DNE	Out of State	HP	50
4/12/2020 17:44	WB4HRL	Out of State	HP	4
4/12/2020 4:23	WN4AFP	Fixed	LP	40
NeQP				
4/6/2020 3:31	K3DNE	Out of State	HP	1,216
4/10/2020 2:53	NI7R	Fixed	HP	37
4/8/2020 1:24	WB4HRL	Out of State	HP	4
4/5/2020 22:17	WN4AFP	Out of State	LP	2,995
NMQP				
4/12/2020 16:40	K3DNE	Single Op	HP	240
4/12/2020 5:01	WN4AFP	Single Op	LP	500
OnQP				
4/19/2020 18:01	K3DNE	Single Op	HP	4,312
4/20/2020 13:47	N4XL	Single Op	LP	60
4/21/2020 11:05	WB4HRL	Single Op	HP	465
4/19/2020 21:43	WN4AFP	Single Op	LP	10,250
Rus DX				
3/23/2020 13:21	N4XL	SOSB/20	LP	120
VaQP				
3/23/2020 1:29	K3DNE	SOAB/PhFixed	HP	26,166
3/23/2020 2:17	NI7R	SOAB/MixedFixed	HP	2,088
3/25/2020 2:15	WN4AFP	SOAB/MixedFixed	LP	17,712

WPX SSB				
4/3/2020 22:35	AC4MC	SO(A)AB	HP	116,076
3/30/2020 1:55	K3DNE	SO(A)AB TB-Wires	HP	1,925,664
3/31/2020 1:27	K7OM	SOAB	HP	5,618
3/30/2020 0:17	NU4E	SO(A)AB TB-Wires	LP	1,044,732
3/30/2020 0:46	WB4HRL	SO(A)AB	HP	99,320
3/30/2020 1:10	WJ4X(N4XL)	SO(A)AB	LP	779,613
4/1/2020 0:43	WN4AFP	SOSB40 Classic TB-Wi	LP	59,079

Guest Article:

Space WX: (From Tamitha Skov's YouTube page 4/17/2020)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jDgVkjYXpVM>

73,

Kevan N4XL