CCO RadioSport News

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The official newsletter of Contest Club Ontario. Devoted to the sport of ham radio contesting.

DISASTER

Antenna grinch steals Christmas cheer at VA3EF. See story and more photos on page 2. George vows to rebuild.

Inside this issue:

It's been a great year

Hello CCO:

It has been a great year for CCO. These record club accomplishments for a Canadian Club have been outstanding and I want to congratulate all the members that participated. I notice also that the BCDX Club has become more active in contests.

I hope others will follow. Club competition is a great way to be a part of a greater whole even with a modest set-up. In fact, the more modest the set-up, the more skill you develop! 100W or QRP into a vertical or dipole is a fantastic training ground.

There are many CCO members that have been producing outstanding scores under these conditions.

I have to issue a caution concerning increasing our club standings in each succeeding year. Nice though it might be, we are all latitude-challenged in CCO and catching the Tennessee group or the Florida group in something like the ARRL 10m Contest just isn't likely to happen until the Sunspots are a lot healthier!

What we can do is put forward our best effort and increase the number of participants each time out. There are a number of members rebuilding their stations. I'm looking forward to their results.

I will be taking on the job of First Vice-President of RAC in 2004 and rest assured that contesting issues will be well supported by me, in fact one of the many chores will be the supervision of the RAC Canada Day and Canada Winter Contests.

Both of these contests have been through rough times lately and I will do my best to assure accurate and timely reporting in the future. CCO and RAC should be looking at a great year in 2004!

73,

Bob VE3KZ, President

One 3-second blow

According to George, VA3EF, the November 13 wind that took down his 72-foot Trylon tower and a Force 12 Magnum 340/620 (3 elements on 40 and 6 elements 0n 20) and a Force 12 4BA (17, 15, 12, 10) sounded like "someone took a deep breath in."

George was outside watching a lightening storm which preceded a major blow which whipped across southern Ontario and watch the tower fall.

George will be looking for help to rebuild in the spring. If you're located in the GTA and can lend a hand either in the air or on the ground you'll be more than welcome.

Harry, VA3EC, takes a close look at the wreckage.

RTTY starter

by Don Cassel VE3XD

Introduction

While some contesters find the fast pace of a major CW or Phone contest exhilarating, others may find it to be a rather intimidating experience. This is especially true for beginners to contesting who have not yet mastered the details of fast exchanges and big pileups.

An alternative to getting started is with RTTY contesting which is generally a much slower paced contest when compared to the other modes. Or maybe you are just looking for a different type of contesting mode and RTTY can be just the ticket for a new and satisfying experience. Either way take a look at RTTY and see if you don't find it to be as much fun as the main modes of contesting.

There are 20 or more significant RTTY contests that run during the year. While only six of these are eligible for club contesting there is plenty of opportunity to get your feet wet with any number of these contests.

They range from the widely attended CQ/RJ WW RTTY which has a large contingent of operators world wide, as you might expect, to the North American QSO Party RTTY contest which has mainly U.S. and Canadian participants.

If you are looking to fill in the gap of missing DXCC countries for RTTY then in addition to the CQ/RJ WW RTTY try one or more of CQ/RJ WPX RTTY, ARRL RTTY Round Up, or JARTS WW RTTY contests. All of these are well attended and will likely help you to net a few more countries in your log.

In this article we will look at how to get your station set up for RTTY, what software to use, and some techniques for making the most of your operating experience. As we are mainly addressing the beginner to RTTY contesting little or no experience will be assumed in the following.

Station setup

Getting set up for RTTY is a little more involved than phone or CW but with today's computer hardware it's not really that difficult. With phone or CW it is possible to get on the air and do some contesting with only a mike or key. You probably need to do more than that to get serious with contesting, such as install some logging software, but some guys just jump in with a paper log and little else. On the other hand to get started with RTTY you will need some additional hardware and software added to your station to operate effectively.

Hardware

When I first began using RTTY in the early 90's the way to go was with a TNC and some matching software. In general the TNC plugged into your computer's serial port and also into the RTTY connector on your radio. Software then interfaced the two and you were in operation. You could transmit using either FSK (Frequency Shift Keying) or AFSK (Audio Frequency Shift Keying) depending on your configuration. A capable TNC was a significant investment unless you could pick one up at a hamfest but with it you also had access to other digital modes. At the time I played with RTTY, AMTOR, PACTOR, GTOR and HF Packet. The only one of these that is heard much on HF anymore is RTTY and a newer mode, PSK-31 has become popular, but that's another story.

More recently software has been developed to take

advantage of the sound card that resides in virtually all of today's computers. So you can get set up to operate RTTY and other digital modes without a TNC. There is an ongoing argument whether it is better to use FSK or AFSK for RTTY. Suffice it to say that I have only used AFSK and have been very satisfied with the results. So that being my first hand experience the following discussion will centre on getting AFSK and the soundboard to work.

Receive interface

To begin, you need a receive interface between the sound card and the radio as shown in Figure 1. The isolation transformer can be a Radio Shack 273-1374 or equivalent. The transformer is used to block any DC hum that might be present in the line. I found that one computer, a desktop, required the isolation while another, a laptop, did not. Shielded audio cables with appropriate connectors for your rig and soundboard should be used for the wiring.

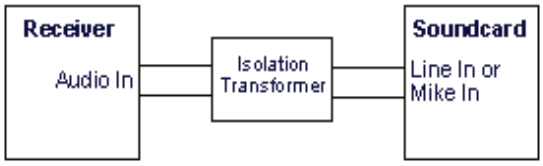


Figure 1. Connecting the receive audio to the sound card.

You could stop right there and check to see if you are receiving RTTY signals okay by running your software. That will at least confirm that one half of your system is working okay. You can't work them if you can't hear them. Right?

Transmit interface

A similar setup is used to connect the soundboard to the mike on your transmitter (see Figure 2). I've used at different times, the actual microphone connector, the phone patch connector and the Packet connector. The advantage of the phone patch connector is that you don't have to unplug the mike to use RTTY. The Packet connector on the Mark V let's you use extra filtering that is not available in LSB mode which is the mode generally used for RTTY operation.

Whether you use the Line In or Mike In for receive or Line Out or Headphones for transmit is a matter of sound levels in your card. I use the Mike In and Line Out on my sound card and that seems to work best for me. You may have to experiment a little to get the right combination.

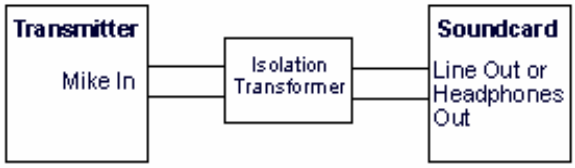


Figure 2. Connecting the transmit audio to the sound card.

Other alternatives

In the past year I have replaced the above circuits with a Rigblaster Plus. This allowed me to integrate my rig, digital and CW connections all into one unit. West Mountain Radio have a number of units, one of which will likely satisfy your needs if you are so inclined to bypass the homebrew approach. MFJ also has some similar units. If you are handy with home brewing then that is a very inexpensive way to get started.

RTTY software

The next link in the RTTY chain is software that will not only receive the RTTY audio and convert it to text on the screen but also interface with your radio to send RTTY. There are any number of programs out there that are suitable as any Google search will show. Some are free and other cost a small amount or much more depending on features and their purpose.

Space is limited here so only three will be mentioned.

MMTTY

The first is MMTTY as shown in Figure 3. MMTTY was developed by Makoto Mori (JE3HHT) who has also written a very popular SSTV program called MMSSTV. One of the best features of MMTTY is that it is free. But don't let that fool you. It is one of the best RTTY programs around. So much so that many Writelog users also download a plug-in so that MMTTY can be run directly within Writelog.

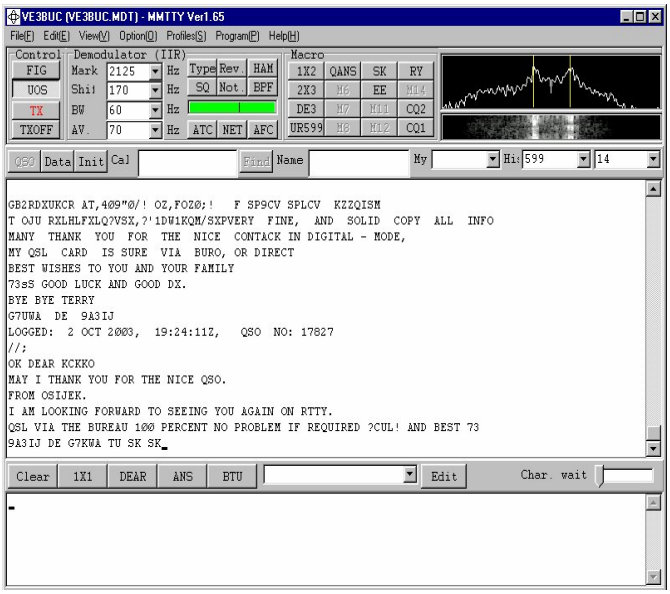


Figure 3. MMTTY by JE3HHT

MMTTY is a fully featured program that includes the ability to pre-program buffers for stored messages and also a built-in logbook. One of the many exceptional features is the ability to copy fluttered or multi-path signals. When you encounter one of these hard to copy signals just click the option and settings are changed to optimize signal deciphering. MMTTY is also good at copying weak signals. Often I have been about to transmit CQ after not hearing a response only to see a station coming back to me on the screen. No S-meter movement and no obvious audio unless you listen very carefully and yet MTTY heard it.

If you just want to play with RTTY this is a great way to start at no cost to you. I personally use MMTTY as a plug-in to Writelog and find it to be very effective. MMTTY is available for downloading at www.qsl.net/mmhamsoft/.

MixW

MixW was developed by Nick Fedoseev (UT2UZ) and Denis Nechitailov (UU9JDR) and is shown in Figure 4. Like MMTTY it has its following of users and is highly regarded as a program for many of the digital modes. In addition to RTTY, modes such as CW, PSK, Pactor, Packet, SSTV and others are included in a single program.

MixW also includes logging capabilities and macros that can be recorded for frequently used exchanges. Unfortunately in its current configuration it cannot be integrated with Writelog so I have been unable to give it a decent test.

As a standalone program is appears to work very well. You can download MixW from http://www.mixw.net/ and use it for a test period of 15 days. After that it will cost you $50.00 U.S. to register it.

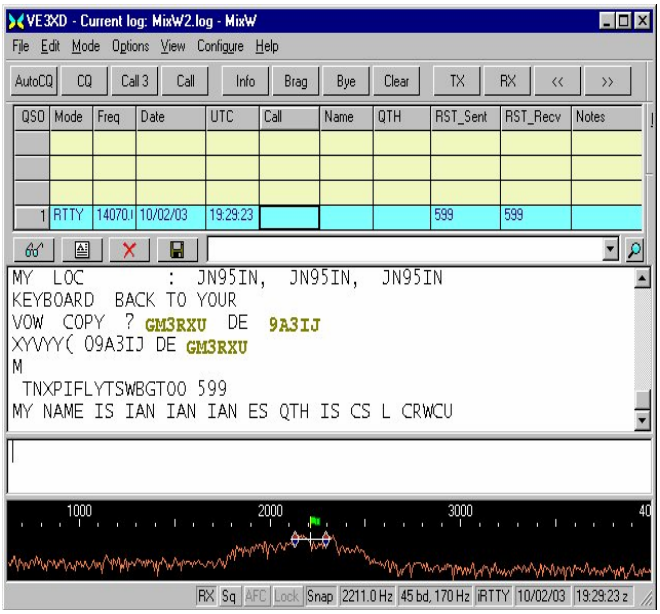


Figure 4. MixW by UT2UZ and UU9JDR

Both the MMTTY and MixW websites have far more information about these products than can be presented here so it's best to spend some time there comparing features. Then download them both and give them a test run.

Writelog

Writelog is really much more than just a RTTY program. It is a fully featured contesting program that supports all major contests and many others. It includes Phone, CW, RTTY and PSK modes. Writelog (Figure 5) was developed by Wayne Wright (W5XD) who continues to support it with regular updates.

In addition to providing all the features for operating RTTY, Writelog gives the support you need to contest effectively. On the fly you can do dup checking, check for partial calls, check on what bands you have worked the caller, tell where to point your beam and so on. Writelog also gives a running summary of how you are doing in the contest. At the end of the contest just a few clicks will prepare your log and/or summary to be sent to the contest sponsors, 3830 or CCO. If you are a packet user it has built-in spot capability.

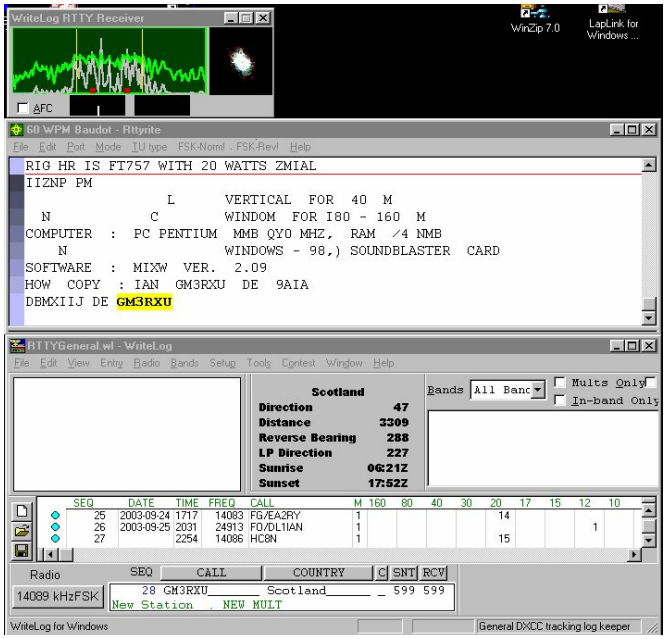


Figure 5. Writelog with one of its many possible window settings.

You can connect either to a packet station or to one of many Internet spotting servers. With the spot feature you can easily identify new multipliers and/or stations that you have not worked. Stations you have already worked are not displayed to minimize the clutter. Spotted stations can also be displayed on a bandmap which is a useful tool for search and pounce operating to see at a glance where new stations are located on the band. Remember not all contests permit the use of spotting clusters for all modes of operation. You can find Writelog at http://www.writelog.com/. At $75.00 U.S. it's a bargain.

I'm sure if you talk to a few hams who run RTTY you will discover other software that they like. You may hear about RTTY by WF1B which is also a highly regarded program among contesters. DXLabs also has a following.

It covers many aspects of operating beyond contesting and is a huge suite of programs. If you have lots of time for a large learning curve this may be worth checking out. Whatever you do, get started.

Trial run

Now that you've decided on some software and have the soundcard connected at least spend a little time previewing the help files that come with your software. In particular at this time check into the settings you will need for the configuration you are using. In my case with Writelog I needed to tell it that my rig was on COM1, that I'm using soundcard AFSK and that LSB is really FSK.

Each program will have to be told what you are using so don't leave this to the last minute as sometimes what seems obvious, isn't. For example, the setting "LSB is really FSK" in Writelog is rather obscure and is easily missed but without it RTTY simply doesn't work. Next you will want to get on the air and make a few RTTY contacts. Not only will this

help you to become familiar with your software but you will also get comfortable with tuning a RTTY signal, sending and receiving messages and how to deal with fading signals, QRM and the like. Much of the time you can find someone operating RTTY on 20 meters between 14.080 and 14.090. Remember to set your rig at 50% or less of full power as RTTY is a full duty cycle mode and you don't want to fry the finals. Therefore a 100 watt radio should be set to transmit at 50 watts or less.

Message buffers

When you are contesting in RTTY you will want to set up all of your exchange information in buffers or memory so you can minimize any typing needed during the contest. This is a good idea also for general communication so that you can setup a CQ message, signal report, or W5ABC de VE3XD BTU type of message. In a contest you should aim to do no typing and setup your messages accordingly.

Each program will have a different scheme for storing messages and some require special codes to begin and end transmission or to include data such as a callsign, or serial number in the exchange. You may prefer a different arrangement than me and can make your own personalized set of messages. Another suggestion is to make up a paper template for the function keys with the purpose for each key written above the key position. That way you can see at a glance which key does what. Table 1 shows the Writelog function key messages I used in the CQ/RJ WW RTTY contest in 2003. In general function keys F2 to F4 are used when operating search and pounce. Keys F5 to F7 are for running. F1 is the Help key aka Windows. The others provide for other needs during the contest.

In addition I have some Shift-function keys setup for other needs such as sending my call three times, asking for a repeat on the other station's callsign, asking for a province instead of a state. Planning ahead helps to virtually eliminate the need for typing messages during the contest. Although the messages are typed in lowercase they send in uppercase as RTTY has only uppercase letters and numbers. In the case of Writelog, other programs will use different conventions, the entries beginning with % are special characters that substitute a value. The ones used in the Table 1 are:

- %C Substitutes the callsign currently in the QSO entry window. The call gets there either by clicking it in the RTTY window or by typing it into the QSO window.
- %R Is equivalent to pressing the Return key during transmission.
- %E Defines the end of message and returns Writelog to receive mode.
- %H Includes the name of the called station from a Friends file that matches call signs with first names.

This contest doesn't include a serial number exchange but if it did then a %3 could be included to provide a

Key	Buffer Contents	Example of Sent Message
F2	%C de ve3xd ve3xd %R%E	GU0SUP DE VE3XD VE3XD
F3	%C hi %h tu 599-04-on-on ve3xd %R%E	GU0SUP HI PHIL TU 599-04-ON-ON VE3XD
F4	agn agn bk %R%E	AGN AGN BK
F5	cq test de ve3xd ve3xd cq %R%E	CQ TEST DE VE3XD VE3XD CQ
F6	%C hi %h 599-04-on-on %c %R%E	JH4UYB HI MASA 599-04-ON-ON JH4UYB
F7	%C qsl tu de ve3xd qrz? %R%E	JH4UYB QSL TU DE VE3XD QRZ?
F8	on on on on on on qsl?%R%E	ON ON ON ON ON ON QSL?
F9	de ve3xd%R%E	DE VE3XD
F10	State? bk%R%E	STATE? BK

Table 1. CQ/RJ WW RTTY Writelog buffers.

three-digit serial number from the log. Codes such as %C and %3 can also be used for CW contesting which generally has much shorter exchanges. So now that the software is set up and you have been able to make a few contacts let's get on with RTTY contesting.

Search and Pounce

If you've never operated a RTTY contest before then starting with search and pounce is certainly easier and less nerve racking than running. I highly recommend getting started that way. In fact I began contesting with only a low mounted G5RV and then a vertical a few years later and for several years only used S&P. This is good experience as you wait and listen for a calling station and then jump in with your call sign (hit key F2) after his CQ. Then when you are recognized and have received his exchange, send your exchange by pressing F3 and you are in the log. Forget the pileups, especially early in the contest as you can waste a lot of time with little return for your efforts. Using search and pounce will help you get familiar with the different way operators work the contest and to get a feel for the rhythm of RTTY contesting.

Running

To run successfully in a RTTY contest you will need a reasonably competent station. One of the reasons I did not do much other than search and pounce with my G5RV was that my signal was not strong enough to be heard very well. A much better QSO rate for me could be had by using S&P. So if you have at least a small directional antenna or a fairly good vertical then you can give running a shot.

Begin by looking for a clear frequency. In the CQ/RJ WW RTTY this is easier said than done. Moving to either the low or high end of the RTTY frequencies can help. When ready hit the function key to send out your CQ. You will likely need to repeat this a few times before you get a response so keep trying. In my case I hit F5 and the CQ is sent. Writelog also has an auto-repeat CQ so you won't wear out your finger. Believe me, in a long contest this is a really nice feature. When a station comes back to you enter the call into the logging window and send the exchange.

Usually I would be able to click the call sign in the Writelog RTTY window and then press F6 to send the exchange. When you have received his exchange enter it in the log and press F7. You have completed the contact. If you missed anything then ask for a repeat by pressing the appropriate key to send the request. Handling QRM in RTTY is not as easy as in CW or Phone. In those modes you can often pull out a character or two and ask for the XE1 or the DL station.

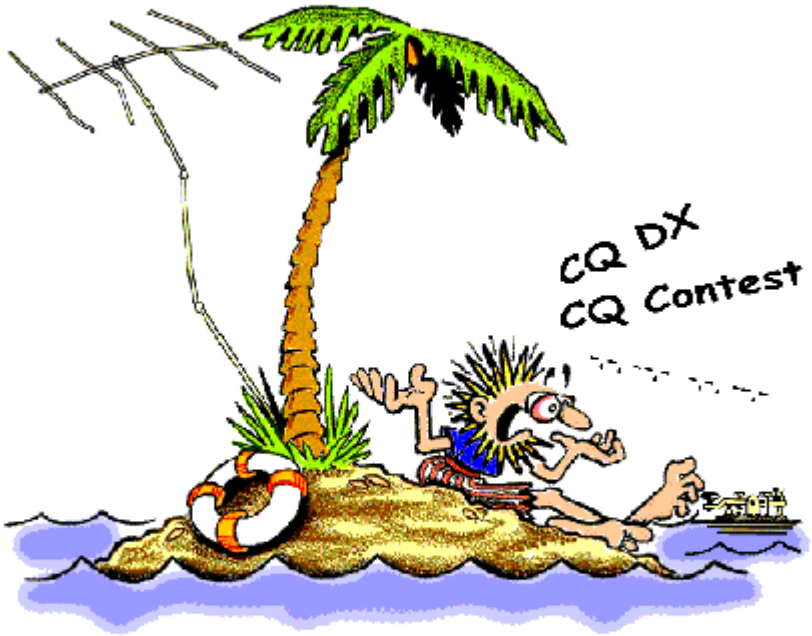
In RTTY if two or more stations call together you normally only see garbage on the screen. Rather than ask for a repeat of the call, because if you do you will just get the same mess again, wait a few seconds. One of the stations is likely to recognize what happened and will send his call before any of the others and you will be able to read it. That is why I have my call recorded once in F9 to use in S&P for that very purpose. Now you can reply to that station and complete the exchange.

Don't expect to see high rates in RTTY. It is very unusual to have a rate of 100 per hour for very long in RTTY. Maybe for a few minutes you will see the rate meter hit that level. Over the course of an hour or more rates of 60 or less are more common. The reason of course is that the messages are long enough to take a some time to complete. Some of the messages can be made a little shorter to save time but unless you have a very competitive station that is unlikely to make much difference over the course of the contest.

Summary

RTTY contesting can be a lot of fun and a easy going mode of operating. You can even eat a sandwich and sip on a cup of java and keep contesting without interruption. Try that with phone. Once you have mastered the basics and are look for new challenges you can even move to the single operator two radio approach. Use one radio for running and the other to look for new contacts and mults. Writelog supports this mode of operating and provides for two logging windows and two RTTY windows. Multitasking is not my style so a single radio works fine for me. So bottom line, why not give RTTY contesting a try?

VE3BW/HR9



CQ WW Contest 2003
Roatan Island, Honduras

by VE3BW/HR9 Roatan Island, Honduras 2003

The decision to operate from Roatan, Honduras was one of those opportunities that you just can't decline. Our friend Gary, AH6PN/HR9 operates a dive resort on the east end of Roatan in the Bay Islands of Honduras.

The Bay Islands were part of British Honduras (now Belize V3) until 1891 when they were peacefully ceded to Honduras. Many families on Roatan are descendants of English pirates and escaped slaves. The families have a long history on the islands going back to the 1600's.

Gary (AH6PN/HR9) needed to return stateside to pick up repair parts for the dive business and needed someone to watch his scuba shop and dive resort. Fortunately Peter VA3WET and I are both scuba instructors and were available after our plans to operate from St. Kitts fell through. Peter and I had visited the same resort in October 1998.

We were just wrapping up the CQWW SSB test in 1998 when Gary, AH6PN/HR6 came into the apartment to tell us that Hurricane Mitch had changed direction and was heading towards us.

The remainder of the week was spent securing the hotel and operating portable from a Toyota Van in the hills of Roatan. Contesting had honed our skills as traffic handlers and we spent 20 hours a day operating my trusty Icom 706 mk II from a car battery with a dipole. Hurricane Mitch caused more damage in Central America than any other storm during the 20th Century.

Back in 1998 we used a TH6dxx at 50 feet but 9 years of salt air had left the antenna a pile of scrap. We needed a general purpose antenna that would give us a decent signal. We ended up with a Carolina Windom, the 160-10 meter model. It turned out to be a good choice, probably because half of the antenna was located 50 feet above the ocean. Gary had installed a mast at the end of his 100ft dock and the centre of the antenna was attached to a water tower where the old beam had been installed.

Joe (VE3BW) and Brenda.

With no backup I was QRT.

Peter and I had both brought our own Icom IC 706's, power supplies, tuners and laptops. It is always good to have redundancy when DXing. Back in 1996 I made the mistake of not testing a power supply. When I arrived in HI 8 land, the power supply lasted about 15 minutes. With no backup I was QRT.

The trip to Roatan was smooth and we were excited talking about contesting and scuba diving. Gary was there to meet us at the airport. Roatan had not changed much in the last five years and it was good to see that the damage caused by Hurricane Mitch was now just a memory.

After a one hour drive to the Resort we quickly unpacked our gear and dove into the wonderful reefs of Roatan.

The sun comes early in Honduras and at 6 a.m. in 30 C temperatures I spent the morning putting up the Windom antenna and adjusting it.

We tried four different sections of coax cable before I found a section of RG 8 that was good. I quickly tuned the antenna up and made some QSO's on 12 meters.

The location was very quiet and it was easy to pick out the weak stations calling from JA and Europe. Joe and Peter would be happy Hams!

The week went by quickly and we were disheartened to hear about the solar flare. As the contest approached it didn't seem to affect radio conditions on the higher frequency bands at all. The contest was going well except that conditions on 160-80 were appalling. It was as though there was a wall at W4 land and we just could not break through.

Saturday evening we gave each other a high five as we hit 1,000,000 points. Just as we gloated in hitting our first target the power went out on the entire island. Murphy had hit.

We sat in the dark with our flashlights trying to think of an alternate power source. Hmmm we could use a car battery but how would we power our laptop?

Peter was regretting not bringing his Canadian Tire power inverter. After what seemed like a lifetime the power came back on. We were back in the contest. The runs on 15 and 10 meters were fun and it was rewarding to see what a micro-light operation could do.

Around 12:01pm on Sunday the receiver background noise changed abruptly. A quick tune on 20 meters found no signals. The same was found on the other frequencies. Over the next few hours the bands slowly came back to life.

The conditions were nothing like the early part of the contest. We managed 1722 QSO's and ended with a score of 1,275,000 points.

Some of the high lights of the contest were having a JT call us and working slews of VK's and ZL's that thanked us for a new country.

The next week was spent exploring Roatan, diving and DXing. In total we made over 3,000 QSO's with 103 different countries.

On Saturday Nov.1st it was with sadness that we lowered the antenna and packed up our gear for the long trip home. We had such a great vacation/DXpedition that we made plans for next year.

Thanks to Gary AH6PN/HR9 for letting us stay at Oak Bay Resort and helping with the antenna. Thanks to Brenda Arndt our fellow diver, cook and bottle washer and special thanks to my wife Cindy for being so understanding and allowing me to globetrot all over the world to DX and Dive.

PS. Look for Peter VA3WET/VP9 and Joe VE3BW/VP9 in the 2004 CQWW SSB from Bermuda.

No it's not "Survivor Roatan Island. This is the picturesque QTH on Roatan, rustic and fun!

What a year for CCO

By Don, VE3XD

What a year for CCO! Now that we have almost completed a first full year of operation it's time to congratulate all the CCO members for their participation in more than 30 contests and setting a significant placement in a good number of them. For a young contest group CCO has made its mark in the contesting community. We have caused other contest clubs to take notice and hopefully challenged them and us to do even better in 2004.

As individuals we will need to do all we can in the next few years to keep our motivation going. Over the past few years I have personally been able to better my personal scores each year in a number of contests. This year however is showing a change in that. Even with a new tower and beam it has been difficult to match or exceed some of last year's scores. Falling indexes and solar events have taken their toll and things will likely only get worse in that regard. The recent ARRL 10 meter contest was a good indication of this change. While there was lots of 10m activity little of it was available from Europe or Japan where in the past few years many contacts were possible. On the other side of this issue is the rare occasion when propagation still cooperates such as in the CQWW CW contest where I was able to set a new personal best.

As 10 meters drops off, can 15 be far behind, yet the low bands will show improvement. But as the low bands improve some of us city folk will have difficulty taking advantage of that due to lack of space for antennas especially on 80 and 160.

Personally I haven't contested through a low period of the sunspot cycle having only just become active again in the mid 90s so I can't tell you what to expect. Perhaps one of the other members will develop this issue.

My expectations are that scores I've seen in the previous few years will not be seen again for awhile. But my only objective in contesting has been to go out and have fun and meet the many people that I have worked in numerous previous contests or in other QSOs.

It's always a pleasure to work a familiar call sign and even take a second or two to say hello during the contest exchange. My hope for CCO is to get more members active in more contests. With more than 120 members only a small percentage are active in most contests. Of course we all have other priorities in life besides contesting but even putting in a few hours over the weekend can make an important contribution to the club's score.

Pick a few contests that you personally would find enjoyable and put them into your calendar. Maybe allocate a few hours on a weekend afternoon or evening to make a few contacts. You'll find this adds to your enjoyment of ham radio and contributes to the club. You don't need a big station to get involved. My wish is all the best to everyone for the holiday season and a very good 2004. See you in the next contest.

Don Cassel VE3XD
CCO Director of Communications

The (contesting) road ahead…

By Travis, VE3WO

The turn of the New Year is a time when we traditionally reflect on the year that has been, and is also an opportunity to look ahead.

Our first full year as a club has been dizzying, with tremendous growth, unprecedented activity, and some startling successes packed into a short twelve months. We have been noticed by the contesting world, and are quickly becoming accepted as a genuine competitor by the most successful clubs out there.

The purpose of this article, however, is not to look back, but rather to look ahead to the coming year. There are many things that I would like to see happen within CCO this year, and most of these are common-sense things that everyone would agree with. Below, I've listed a club recipe for success, and primary goals at both a club and personal level.

The recipe for success:

The most important goal, in terms of improving club scores in the short-term (i.e. 2004), is to increase the participation level of club members in contests. As stated so succinctly by other clubs, we need "more bums in the seats"!

We have a great base of more than 100 contesters, but we're hard-pressed to break the 40 op level for even the biggest of contests. We must be able to field more logs in the big tests if we want to have a chance at winning a club competition.

Organize a multi-op; huddle with your CCO buddies who are less active and encourage them to add just one more contest to their calendar this year; try a dxpedition; work that contest just an hour or two longer than you usually do… all of these things will raise the bum-in-the-seat factor, and bulk up our scores accordingly.

The club goal:

As a club, we should set a goal of winning at least one club competition in the upcoming year. We came really close this past year, with second-place finishes in both the California QSO Party and in the ARRL 10-Meter Contest. Very impressive showings in other major contests round out the results. If we are able to put on such a great show in our early days, I don't think it is too much of a stretch to imagine that a gavel is within reach. We're not ready to win CQWW DX (yet…), but with a concerted effort and a little planning, we are certainly able to contend for top spot and everlasting fame in tests like the 10-Meter or Topband tilts.

The personal goal:

Since the beginning, I've said that a contest club is far more than simply a vehicle for submitting scores in club competitions. In my mind, that has always been just one of the many activities of a successful contest club. We would all agree that a worthy personal goal, as contesters, would be to promote the growth of contesting.

We already count among our membership the majority of active contesters in Ontario; the only way to bring new contesters into CCO is to make new contesters from scratch. No one will dispute that the average age of our members will continue to rise unless we are able to bring new blood, and new enthusiasm, into the VE3 contesting community. As such, I issue to all of you the following challenge:

During the next 12 months, **I CHALLENGE EVERY SINGLE CCO MEMBER TO CREATE A NEW CONTESTER**.

Introduce an amateur you know to the world of contesting; educate them, involve them in your contesting activity; ELMER them! Bring a young person into amateur radio, and introduce them to the fun that radiosport can bring. Make this your mission, and do not rest until you succeed!

I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every member who has contributed their time, their effort, their knowledge, or their score, to the Contest Club Ontario cause this past year. I have never been more proud of a group with which I've been involved, and I cannot wait to see what awaits us down this exciting path we've chosen. Also, my thanks to the other members of the Executive who have contributed countless hours, working toward the success of this club. Finally, please remember those other members who work to create your newsletter, organize your awards, generate discussion on the reflector, and wave the CCO (and the Canadian!) flag from exotic (and sometimes cold) QTH's on contest weekends throughout the year.

To Andy Rugg, VA3TEE/VE2EM, CCO member, now SK… 73 OM, es thx fer all the fb qso. We will all remember your dedication to amateur radio, and certainly to contesting. I will think of you every time I cross a county line in Ontario, OM. – dit dit –

73 de Travis VE3WO

QRT by VE3HG

Oh wow what a wonderful issue! Editors always think there won't be enough copy to fill the space. Our problem this issue was how to stop laying out pages! We've received absolutely first-class articles for this issue and for the last one. Can we keep up the quality? I hope so. This is a fabulous newsletter to edit because of our contributors. I wanted to get this issue out before Christmas and here it is. Merry Christmas everyone and Happy New Year. Go, go, CCO.

73, Peter, VE3HG