



International Amateur Radio Union Region 1

Europe, Middle East, Africa and Northern Asia

Founded 1950

Committee C4 (HF Matters) Interim Meeting 20-21 April 2013 InterCity Hotel, Vienna

SUBJECT	Contest-free 3rd full weekend in October for recruitment of young radio amateurs via Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA)		
Society	NRRL	Country:	Norway
Committee:	C4	Paper number:	VIE13/C4/09
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Background

For a number of years we have at IARU Region 1 Conferences and Interim Meetings discussed the possibility of having at least one contest-free weekend on the HF bands. Contests are of course good to show activity and that we use the amateur radio bands ("use them or lose them"). But with 8 - 9 contests per weekend, and the number of contests increasing, we hear from our society members an increasing groan (see an example in Appendix 1) that it has become ever so difficult to find a clear spot on the bands for that pleasant and relaxing non-contest contact during the weekends on the 5 "classic" bands + 160 m – unless they use the contest-free, narrow bands of 30, 17, and 12 meters, with limited propagation.

Jamboree-on-the-Air (JOTA) was established in 1958 by Leslie "Les" Mitchell, G3BHK. A *World Scout Jamboree* is a camp where scouts from all over the world get together to learn about the world brotherhood of scouting. But it is costly to travel to a World Jamboree, and all the millions of scouts cannot be present at one and the same place. Les realized that many scout leaders were also radio amateurs. And with the help of amateur radio, it would be possible to arrange a *Jamboree-on-the-Air*.

JOTA has proven to be an enormous success over the years, with thousands of amateur radio stations taking part, bringing together **about half a million of boy scouts and girls scouts and guides from all over the world every year**. Many authorities allow the scouts to operate the radio under the presence and guidance of the licensed radio amateur.

Amateur radio is also used from national jamborees, smaller scout camps, scout courses, and other scouting events. Some national scout organizations have their own committees for amateur radio and "radio scouting", also organizing amateur radio courses for scouts.

The Norwegian Boy Scout Association established their first "Amateur Radio Committee" in the late 1960s (with LA5CH as its first chairman). **Since that time more than 500 scouts in Norway have become radio amateurs through this radio scouting program, built around the JOTA event. This constitutes more than 10% of the Norwegian radio amateur census!**

There is no exaggeration to say that *the JOTA scouting event with amateur radio is the most effective way to recruit young people to amateur radio*. The 55th JOTA was held in October 2012.

Recruitment of young radio amateurs

IARU Region 1 has during the last years made strategies for recruitment of young radio amateurs. Without active radio amateurs on the amateur radio bands, we may lose our bands! Hence we need to show the pleasure and fun of amateur radio to youngsters, in order to recruit them.

If IARU would assign just one weekend every year towards such recruitment, the 3rd full weekend of October would be ideal, because there already is an annual activity there, JOTA, successfully presenting amateur radio to young people for the last 55 years.

Considerations

The 3rd full weekend of October was selected for JOTA from 1959, *because there were no major contests during that weekend*. The presence of contests will of course limit the activities for the scouts, if the scouts should be presented for trying phone, CW, and digital modes.

How many contests are there per year? In 2012 the [ARRL] Contest Corral database tracks 440 different contests. The online WA7BNM and SM3CER contest calendars have even more contests. Of the 440 tracked in Contests Corral, 326 (74%) are HF-only and 35 (8%) only use the VHF+ bands. 73% feature CW – the most popular contest mode by nearly 2-to-1 over Phone (46%) and Digital (37%). Even though there are 22 more (new) contests this year, the proportion of CW:Phone:Digital remains almost exactly the same. [From ZS4BS "HF Happenings" No. 530, 9 Nov. 2012].

With 52 weekends per year, this gives us an average of 8 - 9 contests per weekend. There are now **15 different contest** on the 3rd full weekend of October (see Appendix 2).

It should here be emphasized that DARC has been extremely cooperative in limiting the band segments for their WAG Contest operation the 3rd weekend of October. But we all know that IARU bandplan segments and contest-regulated segments are not obeyed during the heat of contests.

Contests are absolutely not in the interest of scouts in JOTA, and contests will therefore be counter-productive in trying to catch their interest for amateur radio. A spin-off from JOTA could be that amateur radio societies ask the scouts for help other times during field-day operations (logistics, tower building, logging help, and so on) to further catch their interest in radio and technology.

Scouts also have a focus on emergency preparedness. It could be fruitful if collaboration was sought between scouts and radio amateurs for emergency preparedness.

Existing recommendations

IARU Region 1 made the following recommendation at the Cavtat Conference in 2008, based on a paper from NRRL:

CT08_C3_Rec 24: (Paper CT08_C3_39)

In recognizing the importance of the JOTA for radio amateur recruiting, it is recommended that Member Societies encourage radio amateurs to assist boy scouts and girl guides to participate in the annual JOTA the third full weekend of October each year, organized by the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and to use this opportunity to present amateur radio recruiting possibilities to the scouts/guides.

It has also been discussed in IARU R1 that existing contests should be joined and coordinated, in order to reduce the number of contests. This has successfully been done in the Nordic Countries, e.g., the SAC (Scandinavian Activity Contest), the NRAU-Baltic Contest, and the NAC (Nordic Activity Contest for VHF/UHF/SHF).

The HF Managers' Handbook (Chapter 12; Contest rules and regulations) specifies rules for the establishment of new HF contests within the Region, to be enforced by the Contest Subgroup. This subgroup has been discontinued; although it is assumed that new contests pop up without applying.

What to do?

It must be emphasized that very few of the contests now arranged the 3rd full weekend of October are arranged by IARU member societies. Therefore a resolution to keep the 3rd full weekend of October free of contests, *if accepted by all the IARU regions*, must be presented by IARU to both member societies and to other contest organizers.

NRRL wants to *propose* the following recommendation, which can be discussed or modified at the Interim Meeting:

Recommendation

In recognizing the importance of the JOTA for radio amateur recruiting, it is recommended that Member Societies and other amateur radio contest organizers seek to move contests away from the 3rd full weekend of October, in order to leave this weekend contest-free. The purpose of this is to encourage radio amateurs to assist boy scouts and girl guides to participate in the annual JOTA the third full weekend of October each year, organized by the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM), and to use this opportunity to present the full width of amateur radio to the boy scouts and girl guides, as recruiting possibilities to the scouts/guides.

If a recommendation is agreed on at the Interim Meeting, it is further proposed that the recommendation be submitted to C3 at the next IARU Region 1 Conference, and to forward the recommendation to the other IARU regions.

Appendix 1:

OV6A

10-26-2009, 08:00 PM

The time has come to end the never-ending series of contests. They offer no real value and roughly every weekend the airwaves are saturated with high power over modulated signals. Contesters have no respect for the weekend operator wanting to carry on normal QSO with friends or family. Try to work digital modes during a contest is virtually impossible due to contest operators disregarding band frequency allotments. Time to rethink about having so many contests.

I agree 100 percent. The recent CQ WW SSB contest was just a madhouse! Hams shouting all over the bands (fortunately not on 17 meter) ignoring the unwritten ham spirit: Listen first, then transmit. I cannot see any challenge in this contest business, even if I agree that there are many aspects in our hobby. For me the main idea is to meet friends over the radio, establishing new friendships, and to learn much more about our wonderful world.

Time has come where it is necessary to limit the still increasing number of contests. At least to limit the number of hours they are "on air". 2x24 hours is just far too much.

5P8ZY

Jorgen

From: <http://forums.qrz.com/archive/index.php/t-223035.html>

Appendix 2:

International contests the 3rd full weekend of October 2012

JARTS WW RTTY Contest (full weekend)

LZ Open 80 m Sprint Contest CW (Sat 00 - 04 UTC)

10-10 International Fall QSO Party CW (full weekend)

Youth starts all modes (Sat 08 - 14 UTC)

SYLRA Contest CW RTTY SSB (Sat 10 UTC - Sun 10 UTC)

Iowa QSO Party CW DIGI SSB (Sat 14 - 23 UTC)

New York QSO Party CW DIGI SSB (Sat 14 UTC - Sun 02 UTC)

Polish WW BPSK63 Contest (Sat 14 UTC - Sun 14 UTC)

Stew Perry Topband Distance Challenge "Warm-up" CW (Sat 15 UTC - Sun 15 UTC)

Worked All Germany Contest CW SSB (Sat 1500 UTC - Sun 1459 UTC)

W/VE Islands QSO Party CW DIGI PHONE (Sat 1600 UTC - Sun 2359 UTC)

Feld-Hell Club Sprint (Sat 20 - 22 UTC)

Asia-Pacific Sprint Contest (Sun 00 - 02 UTC)

SP CW Contest (Sun 1600 - 1659 UTC)

Illinois QSO Party CW DIGI SSB (Sun 17 UTC - Mon 01 UTC)

From: <http://www.sk3bg.se/contest/c2012oct.htm>