

# *Ethics in Contesting and DX*

Contesting the RIGHT Way  
*Introducing the Contest Code of  
Ethics*

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# Why do we play games?

- Game
  - A contest with rules to determine a winner
  - An amusement or pastime
  - Fun!
- Games of skill are a means of exploring one's own capabilities
- Games encourage the player to look at, understand, and experience things
- Games teach people lessons about themselves and possibly the world, and allow such insights to be passed on to others.

# An unusual game

- Entrants keep their own score
- Complex rules govern scoring
- Individuals and “team” entries permitted
- Some events include off-times
- Winners of the top-level event often invest \$50k or more and travel to favorable locations
- An on-line network helps participants increase their scores
- Spectators don't find it particularly interesting

Is this Radio Contesting? NO....



# *Birdwatching!*

Birders keep track of “life lists” of bird species seen (“DXCC”)

Audubon started the “Christmas Day Bird Count” in 1900.

Competition got serious after an innocent comment in the book Wild America, when Roger Tory Peterson wrote: ***“My year’s list at the end of 1953 was 573 species”***



# Radio contesting vs. birding

	Contesting	Birding
Premier Event	CQWW, WRTC	Big Year
Smaller event	Sprint	Big Day
Spotting	DX Cluster	Birdingonthe.net
Travel	Zone 9, 10, 33...	Migratory paths
Book/Movie	"To Win the World"	"The Big Year"
Conventions	Dayton, Visalia	Annual, moves around

# They have pileups, too!



# Why do we do radio contests?



- FUN !!!
- Self Improvement
- Personal Satisfaction
- ~~Make a lot of money~~
- Peer Recognition

Internal

External



# Explaining Radio Contesting to a non-ham (or non-contester)



“We operate for 4/24/48 hours, log all the stations we contact, and see who can make the most contacts in the most states, countries”

*“How do you know who won?”*

“We send our logs to the sponsor, and they check them”

*“How do you prevent cheating?”*





# Ethics in Contesting

- Choosing to do the right thing even when no one is looking
- And with SDR technology, log checkers \*are\* looking at what happens on the air
- Unenforceable rules move into the category of ethics



# What do we mean ... Ethics?

- Ethics is the theory of right and wrong actions in a social system
  - Written and unwritten codes of principles and values that govern decisions and actions
- Morals: personal beliefs about right and wrong and define personal character (“Murder is wrong”)
- Ethics: knowing the difference between right and wrong and choosing to do what is right in the view of one’s peers (“My client is entitled to a fair trial”)

# How do we know what to do?



- Written Rules
  - Specified in the contest rules
  - Black and white
- Unwritten “Rules”
  - Interpreted norms
  - Gray



# Some written rules are very clear (some people break these anyway)



- **“A. Single Operator categories:** For all single operator categories, only one person (the operator) can contribute to the final score during the official contest period.”
- “Total output power per band must not exceed 1500 watts or the output power regulations of the country in which the entrant is operating, whichever is less.”



# More examples of Written Rules



- Off times must be a minimum of 60 minutes in length.
- The log MUST show the correct serial number sent and received for each contact.
- The exchange consists of signal report and serial number. Serial numbers sent must be progressive, starting with 001.
- Self-spotting or asking other stations to spot you is not allowed.
- Only the entrant's callsign may be used to aid the entrant's score.



# Written Rules change and are different for different contests



- CQWW Multi-single
  - Only one transmitter and one band permitted during any 10-minute period.
  - Exception: One—and only one—other band may be used during any 10-minute period if—and only if—the station worked is a new multiplier. Ten-minute periods are defined as starting with the first logged QSO on a band. A multiplier station cannot call CQ.
- ARRL DX Multi-single
  - One transmitter.
  - Six (6) band changes per hour.



# Essence of Unwritten Rules

- Just because it is not specifically prohibited in the written rules doesn't mean you can do it!
- Keep the contest on the radio and within the contest period
- Don't give or take unfair advantage

# Examples of Unwritten “Rules”

- Making pre-arranged schedules
- Asking friends to work you ...and nobody else
- Asking for frequency of Mults
- Frequency holding by friends
- Working friends with club calls
- Calling multipliers on the phone
- Having others “help” with your single op effort



# Play fair

- Do not exceed power limits for your category
- Just because the knobs go to 11...



*It is easy to have a big signal by using a big amplifier...  
but it is against the rules!*

# More Unwritten “Rules”

- No “log washing”
  - “Research” using QRZ.com, Spot history, 3830 reports, LoTW, to change callsigns in the log
  - Using utilities to analyze and correct the log
  - Recording the contest and replaying to change log entries
- Don’t ask others who they worked
- Don’t email stations you think you worked
- No rubber clocking (changing times in the log to comply with band-change or off-times)

# Honor Code

- You are responsible for your own reputation
  - Follow the rules!
  - Don't participate at multiops with people who cheat
- Lead by example
  - You never know who is listening or watching
  - Don't do anything you would not want to be made public
- Be vocal
  - Confront cheating when you see it
  - Every incident is an opportunity to teach proper behavior

# A Tale of Two Golfers



## Brian Davis

#2 in Verizon Heritage Tournament  
Voluntarily took penalty for a violation  
2<sup>nd</sup> place...\$400k less than #1  
Widespread congratulations



## Tiger Woods

#4 in Masters Tournament  
"I came to win and didn't"  
Nobody felt sorry



# Peer Pressure

- Social pressure by members of one's peer group to take a certain action, adopt certain values, or otherwise conform in order to be accepted.
- Good
  - Encourage others to follow the rules
  - People respect those who are true to their beliefs
- Bad
  - Letting others influence you into not doing the right thing
  - “everyone else is doing it.”

# From “The Code of Birding Ethics”



- If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.



# Applying Positive Peer Pressure



- Be aware of your motives
  - Is it personal or professional?
  - If necessary, enlist others to help deliver the message
- Give the benefit of the doubt
  - They may not realize what they are doing is against the rules
- Choose the right time
  - Can they listen without feeling attacked?
- Don't be angry or accusatory
  - Treat the issue as a mistake, not a crime
  - Focus on actions, not character
- Take action
  - People cheat because they see others get away with it
  - Not confronting the problem hurts everyone



# THE FAR SIDE / GARY LARSON

What we say to cats... 12-14



What they hear





# Scenario 1

- You discover a local contester uses cluster spotting and enters as single operator unassisted. What do you do?
  - He doesn't win anything so assume it doesn't matter
  - Avoid speaking to him ever again
  - Publicly call him a cheater at the next club meeting
  - Send a letter to the contest sponsor
  - Call him up and ask if he is aware of the rules for the single-operator category

## Scenario 2

- You are invited to a multi-op and upon arrival, you discover they are running 2.5 kW. What do you do?
  - You are there, loud is good, operate anyway
  - Turn the power down to 1500W when you are operating
  - Loudly encourage the other ops to follow your example
  - Quietly ask the owner if he always runs this much power
  - Leave
  - Send a note to the contest sponsor and FCC

# Why do we do radio contests?

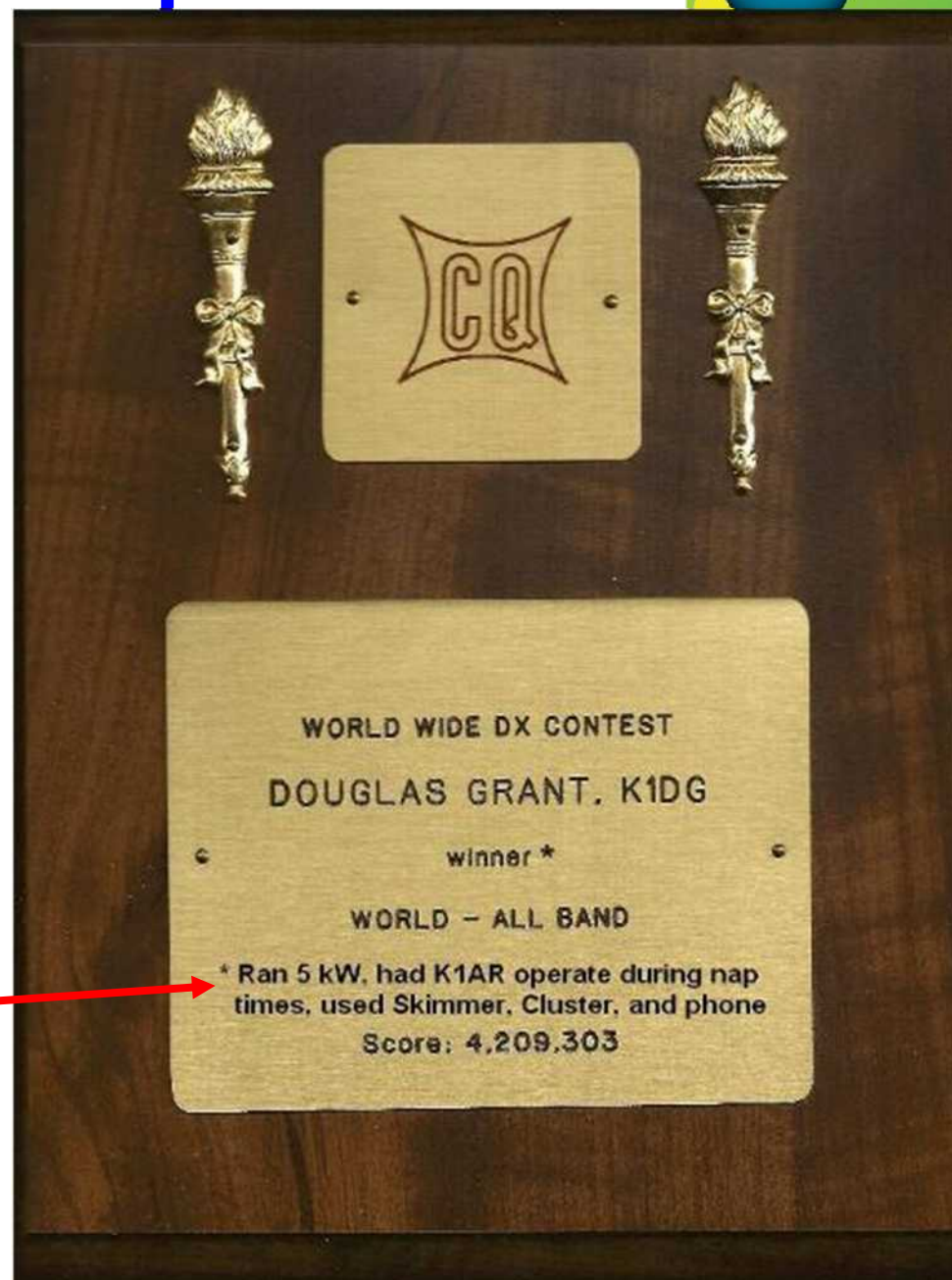


- FUN !!!
  - Self Improvement
  - Personal Satisfaction
  - Peer Recognition
- 
- Make your enjoyment of contesting be about the journey, not the destination



# If a plaque is THAT important to you...3 options

- Call a local awards shop and buy one
- Cheat in an undetectable way
- Request a customized plaque with asterisk



**“I’m not a big gun...it doesn’t matter if I cut corners a bit”**



- ***Yes it does!***
- Bad habits early on become seriously bad habits later
- Your reputation is established early
- Dealing with temptation is hard...“It’s easy if you just give in! And it keeps getting easier”



# The Contest Code of Ethics

## [www.wwrof.org](http://www.wwrof.org)



1. I will learn and obey the rules of any contest I enter, including the rules of my entry category.
2. I will obey the rules for amateur radio in the country of my entry.
3. I will not modify my log after the contest by using additional data sources to correct callsign/exchange errors.
4. I will accept the judging and scoring decisions of the contest sponsor as final.
5. I will adhere to the DX Code of Conduct in my operating style (see [dx-code.org](http://dx-code.org)).
6. I will yield my frequency to any emergency communications activity.
7. I will operate my transmitter with sufficient signal quality to minimize interference to others.



# Contest code of Ethics, expanded

1. I will learn and obey the rules of any contest I enter, including the rules of my entry category.

*No cluster if not permitted, no second op for single ops, off-times per rules, correct output power*

2. I will obey the rules for amateur radio in my country.

*Power, frequency limits, licensing*

3. I will not modify my log after the contest by using additional data sources to correct callsign/exchange errors.

*When it's over, it's over*

# Contest Code of Ethics, expanded pt. 2



**4. I will accept the judging and scoring decisions of the contest sponsor as final.**

***No complaining on CQ-Contest, no lawsuits (or threats)***

**5. I will adhere to the DX Code of Conduct in my operating style (see dx-code.org).**

***Listen, listen, listen; only call when you can hear the station; never trust the cluster (copy the callsign yourself!)***...





# Contest Code of Ethics, expanded pt. 3



**6. I will yield my frequency to any emergency communications activity.**

***Contesting is a game. Emergencies are real life.***

**7. I will operate my transmitter with sufficient signal quality to minimize interference to others.**

***Mic gain below 10; amp not overdriven***

[www.wwrof.org](http://www.wwrof.org)





<http://dx-code.org/>



# DX Code of Conduct, 1

- **I will listen, and listen, and then listen again before calling.**

*Vou escutar, escutar e escutar mais um pouco.*

- **I will only call if I can copy the DX station properly.**

*Vou chamar apenas se escutar a estação DX corretamente.*

- **I will not trust the DX cluster and will be sure of the DX station's call sign before calling.**

*Não vou confiar cegamente no cluster e só vou chamar quando tiver certeza do indicativo da estação DX.*

- **I will not interfere with the DX station nor anyone calling and will never tune up on the DX frequency or in the QSY slot.**

*Não vou interferir a estação DX nem outra estação tentando contato e jamais vou sintonizar na frequência do DX ou na janela de QSY.*

# DX Code of Conduct, 2

- **I will wait for the DX station to end a contact before I call.**  
*Vou esperar que a estação DX termine um contato antes de chama-lo.*

- **I will always send my full call sign.**  
*Sempre vou transmitir meu indicativo completo.*

- **I will call and then listen for a reasonable interval. I will not call continuously.**  
*Vou sempre chamar e escutar durante intervalos razoáveis, não vou chamar continuamente.*

- **I will not transmit when the DX operator calls another call sign, not mine.**  
*Não vou transmitir quando a estação DX chamar um indicativo que não seja o meu.*

- **I will not transmit when the DX operator queries a call sign not like mine.**  
*Não vou transmitir quando a estação DX chamar um indicativo que não se pareça com o meu.*

# DX Code of Conduct, 3

- **I will not transmit when the DX station requests geographic areas other than mine.**

*Não vou transmitir quando a estação DX chamar uma área ou país que não seja o meu.*

- **When the DX operator calls me, I will not repeat my call sign unless I think he has copied it incorrectly.**

*Quando a estação DX voltar ao meu chamado, eu não vou repetir meu indicativo a não ser que meu indicativo possa ter sido copiado incorretamente.*

- **I will be thankful if and when I do make a contact.**

*Serei grato se e quando fizer um contato.*

- **I will respect my fellow hams and conduct myself so as to earn their respect.**

*Respeitarei meus colegas radioamadores e minha conduta merecerá o respeito deles.*

Note: Translation by PY1NB

# “All the guys at the top are cheating”



- Not “all” of them – in fact, it is a very small minority
  - There are only a few cheaters – this is true in any sport
  - Maybe a few hundred of 12,000 entries in CQWW
  - They don’t last long
- This belief is the primary reason for cheating - in virtually every sport studied!
- Nobody says this about cheaters:
  - “What Davis lost on the course will be regained in his reputation for his honorable act” – *Tournament director*





# The RIGHT way to do contesting

- Play fair
  - Obey the rules, remember this presentation
- Try to do better next time
  - Improve your skills, station

**“Everything in moderation...except for fun. Have *LOTS* of that!”**



# Acknowledgments

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# Who is the final judge ?

- The person in the mirror
  - “Success without honor is an unseasoned dish; it will satisfy your hunger, but it won't taste good.”  
- *Joe Paterno, football coach*
- Your peers
  - “Yeah, I know that guy. He cheats.”  
- *Anonymous Contester*



***Obrigado!***

