

2014 RTTY Roundup Results

New categories and interesting propagation liven up the Roundup.

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In his writeup of the 2013 RTTY Roundup, last year Jay, WS7I, opined that “the great unknown next year will be the propagation.” Judging from the comments and results for this year’s Roundup, Jay was right. Propagation was great for some, a challenge for many, and produced some shakeups in the results.

Despite the slight drop in overall participation this year, there were many new participants and many of them were also new hams. No stranger to RTTY, but a first-time Roundup contestant, 15-year-old Georgia, NY2GB, noted: “I had a total time on of 4 hours, 49 minutes and made 172 QSOs. My run on 21080 lasted 59 minutes from 1849 to 1948 (QSO numbers 86 to 137) for a total of 51 QSOs.” An excellent run for any operator.

Not to forget the slightly longer-in-the-tooth hams among us, Will, WC2L, wrote, “First semi-effort and had a blast. Got to do this more often!” John, N8FYL, said, “My first RTTY Roundup. Learned a lot. Had fun. Need to be more prepared next year!” and Daniel, N2DD, “Not bad for my first day of RTTY ever!”

Propagation, or “Where the Heck is Europe?”

Even though the solar flux and sunspots were fully on the march towards the apparent Solar Cycle 24 maximum, mixed conditions confronted many participants. Stations toward the east seemed pretty happy, while stations to the west were less so. Don’s, AA5AU, comments echoed the experience of many: “I thought 10 and 15 meters would be better — they were not. I expected a 10 meter band full of EU stations Sunday morning but it didn’t happen. Ten meters did not even open until well past 1400Z and then signals were weak.”

Meanwhile in 4-land, Mike, K4GMH, was pleased: “That was interesting with the nice propagation on the higher HF bands and low noise on the lower HF bands.” Sam, W4PK,

agreed: “Conditions were excellent Sunday morning to Europe on 10 meters and I probably spent too much time there. During the evening hours they were also excellent on 80 meters with many Europeans in the log.” And in Europe, Bernard, F5RD, enjoyed “Very good conditions for this contest with a lot of stations on the five bands.”

Table 1
2013 vs 2014 Category Choice
(all entries)

Category	2013	2014
SOLP	1024	843
SOULP	n/a	225
SOHP	424	331
SOUHP	n/a	254
MSLP	200	29
MSHP	260	40
Total entries	1908	1722



Chad, WE9V, takes a break from the Roundup to give his 9-year-old daughter, Priya, a chance to make some RTTY QSOs as part of Kids Day. [Chad Kurszewski, WE9V, photo]

Unlimited Fun!

Unlimited made its debut in the 2014 Roundup as a category for single operators. Let’s compare the total entries by category between 2013 and 2014, and perhaps divine what decisions were made.

It’s interesting to note the huge shift away from the Multioperator categories — from 460 in 2013 to only 69 in 2014. A little “pivot table” magic in a popular spreadsheet program revealed at least 150 calls that entered MSLP or MSHP in 2013 opted for an Unlimited category this year.

Affiliated Club Competition

Ever since the big contest clubs realized there was more to life than Sweepstakes, friendly competition between the clubs has helped drive participation in other contests like the Roundup. The rivalry between the Northern California Contest Club and the Potomac Valley Radio Club for the coveted gavel got a little closer with the PVRC pulling to within 800,000 points, but the NCCC prevailed, with 65 logs submitted. Meanwhile, the Minnesota Wireless Association pulled up into the Unlimited Club category this year with an impressive 3rd place score of almost 1.8 million.

Competition was even tighter in the Medium Club category, with an especially close race for third place. In first place with over 1.5 million points was the Society of Midwest Contesters. Second and third place were separated by less than 15,000 points, with the Arizona Outlaws Contest Club edging out the Frankford Radio Club, who managed an impressive 1.25 million on only 16 logs.

The Local Club category found the Orleans County Amateur Radio Club in first place with 655 thousand points and 10 logs, more than twice as many points as second place Boeing Employees ARS — St. Louis. The Kansas City Contest Club rounded out the top three with just three logs making it happen.

Top Ten Scores — W/VE

Single Operator, Low Power		Single Operator Unlimited, High Power	
VA2UP	250,954	VE7CC	284,928
AA5AU	240,737	K4GMH	284,532
K2PO	194,235	W0LSD	232,224
K0TI	170,532	K1MK	
KT0DX	142,230	(@K1TTT)	221,255
K0AD	138,402	N6RO	214,375
N9CK	137,456	WA5ZUP	209,559
NT0F	131,428	W1SRD	205,110
KE5OG	128,724	W4DXX	202,150
K1RO	116,802	W5AP	196,262
		W7RY	192,458
Single Operator, High Power		Multioperator, Low Power	
AB5K	347,625	KU5B	199,821
AA3B	306,633	N2WK	162,503
W7RN		K9NR	86,926
(WK6I, op)	278,632	K4FT	59,670
K4RO	242,560	K00Z	54,417
AC0C	227,400	VE3MGY	40,296
K6LL	222,158	K4RFT	38,080
AB0RX	216,184	W0PC/7	32,688
N4ZZ	213,202	AC0E	31,360
K8IA	199,065	N9LAH	31,164
A9IT	188,875		
Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power		Multioperator, High Power	
N2QT	206,976	N0NI	298,934
WE9V	187,354	W0SD	251,518
WW4LL	150,040	KN5O	219,648
WB5TUF	136,539	WY7FD	184,147
AA8R	127,897	K7BTW	174,876
WW3S	123,664	W4RM	168,360
K1SD	113,100	K3MJW	147,917
AD1C	104,092	W6DR	146,740
W3FIZ	101,205	K4WNW	142,890
W1SLF		KV1J	134,512
(KB1JZU, op)	91,908		

New Records

I have good news for all of you who entered in SOULP or SOUHP and won your division or your section: you have just set a new record! For the rest of you, your targets for next year have been set. And I can't help but notice that some section records remain unclaimed. (The full record tables from WM5R are available online at www.arrrl.org/contest-results-articles.)

Only two new DX records were set in the existing categories, including P49X's new world record and new SA record. V5/DL9NDS demolished the African record that stood for 7 years, increasing it by almost 50%. In the new Unlimited categories it is interesting to note that records for Oceania in the Low Power and in Africa for the High Power lay unclaimed — hint, hint!

Wrap Up

This was my first time ever writing anything for *QST*; spending so much time looking at the results of a contest can really give you a different perspective. So often we have been told by our contesting mentors "a few Qs either way won't make a difference" — but some of the close finishes in these results contradict that maxim. In fact, I noticed in a couple of categories that the results were affected by the accuracy of the operator: based on claimed scores Operator A was the winner,

Affiliated Club Competition

Category	Entries	Score
Unlimited		
Northern California Contest Club	65	3,202,878
Potomac Valley Radio Club	53	2,456,716
Minnesota Wireless Assn	54	1,793,519
Medium		
Society of Midwest Contesters	28	1,524,491
Arizona Outlaws Contest Club	26	1,266,544
Frankford Radio Club	16	1,252,196
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	27	1,106,046
DFW Contest Club	12	944,181
Tennessee Contest Group	12	822,668
Contest Club Ontario	19	763,516
ORCA DX And Contest Club	11	639,868
Alabama Contest Group	14	594,172
Grand Mesa Contesters of Colorado	8	570,724
Contest Group Du Quebec	8	569,888
Louisiana Contest Club	5	552,638
Willamette Valley DX Club	14	538,714
Florida Contest Group	14	424,225
Georgia Contest Group	4	400,946
Hudson Valley Contesters and DXers	8	344,912
North Coast Contesters	6	302,196
Carolina DX Association	4	274,558
Mad River Radio Club	7	259,944
Western Washington DX Club	5	236,435
CTRI Contest Group	5	212,839
Rochester (NY) DX Assn	6	196,374
Texas DX Society	3	165,016
Southern California Contest Club	10	139,616
South East Contest Club	6	135,232
Utah DX Assn	3	123,925
Bristol (TN) ARC	4	89,882
Mississippi Valley DX/Contest Club	3	37,056
Local		
Orleans County Amateur Radio Club	10	655,255
Boeing Employees ARS — St. Louis	5	320,042
Kansas City Contest Club	3	317,160
Spokane DX Association	8	306,718
Contest Club California Peninsula	3	199,305
Dominion DX Group	3	187,156
Bergen ARA	5	148,067
Midland ARC	3	137,199
Maritime Contest Club	6	108,366
New Providence ARC	3	67,265

but after log checking (and penalties) Operator B came out on top.

So, under the very crowded conditions of a big RTTY contest like the Roundup, getting the other call and exchange in the log correctly can be quite a challenge — whether your goals involve making a personal best, winning your division, or even the whole thing — so making sure your station is up to the challenge is important.

A proper description of how to configure your software for the signal conditions you are experiencing is way beyond the scope of this report, but a great resource for both the beginning and experienced RTTY operator is AA5AU's excellent rttycontesting.com website. You can find basic and advanced setup instructions, as well as contest rules and Don's own contest reports. Also, the RTTY email reflector on contesting.com is a great place to ask questions and share ideas.

As of this writing it appears that we are at the start of the downward half of the solar cycle. I still remember well the feeling of emptiness that came the first time I experienced that

Top Ten Scores — DX

Single Operator, Low Power		Single Operator Unlimited, High Power	
HI3TEJ	169,950	LZ8E	
SQ9UM	123,640	(LZ2BE, op)	255,080
KH6ZM	98,126	PI4DX	
UC6A	81,061	(PD1DX, op)	175,616
UT7I		XE2K	174,570
(UT2IO, op)	74,428	UW4I	
RG5A	67,860	(US5IQ, op)	168,960
UT5EPP	65,124	OH2HAN	111,012
UR4U		DM5TI	108,300
(UR4UDI, op)	64,800	3Z5N	107,360
F6HRP	63,954	(SP5GRM, op)	
UT8EL	62,748	JM1XCW	106,370
		DJ6QT	86,394
		OH2MZB	79,144
Single Operator, High Power		Multioperator, Low Power	
P49X		W2/WQ6X	107,205
(W0YK, op)	459,624	SP9KDA	99,435
UT0U	223,647	KP2D	81,090
(UT5UDX, op)		UX4E	41,218
SN7Q	206,766	OK2KDS	29,520
(SP7GIQ, op)		LZ9R	26,448
EA1DR	188,955	PY2QG	24,395
V5/DL9NDS	183,655	OK2RVM	19,662
(UT2IZ, op)	173,756	IK2RZG	17,030
UR7GO	165,816	IK2QCF	15,120
PZ5RA	137,830		
IK2NCJ	136,161		
IV3TMV	126,976		
Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power		Multioperator, High Power	
EO3Q	107,969	OL7M	191,268
(UR3QCW, op)		IT9BLB	185,988
ZZ2T	107,378	IQ1RY	180,858
(PY2MNL, op)		OH0Z	138,805
GW0A	101,315	G2F	126,142
(GW4SKA, op)		EA1SA	109,557
F5BEG	99,110	EA2RY	91,859
LA7HJA	97,284	RX7M	69,720
S57AW	85,914	RK3DXW	61,650
HA5BSW	77,826	SZ1A	60,114
UT1IA	74,480		
IT9MUO	71,613		
UR0HQ	62,790		

dread time at the bottom of a cycle when a 15 meter opening was a reason to miss work, and 10 meter openings were but a wistful memory.

What better reason, then, to join us for the 2015 RTTY Roundup, before it's too late? Perhaps next time will be your turn for the Propagation Fairy to favor your efforts. Maybe try to set a new record, or how about a full 24-hour effort? You might be surprised at how far up the leaderboard you find yourself.

A Character Shift

For 12 years, Jay Townsend, WS7I, has penned these reports. For many of us, Jay has been a RTTY Elmer and a willing friend. Even considering my own size 14s, these will be large shoes to fill. — *WK6I*

For the full results, more photos, and regional coverage, see the online version of this article at www.arrrl.org/contest-results-articles.