

## From the Editor

June is Field Day month for amateur radio operators — the first full weekend of June brings the IARU Region 1 (R1) Fieldday CW event (see <https://www.darc.de/der-club/referate/conteste/iaru-region-1-fieldday/rules>), while the fourth weekend ushers in the North American-centric ARRL Field Day (see <https://www.arrl.org/field-day>). Both events focus on demonstrating amateur operators' ability to set up effective temporary communications capabilities that justify our frequency allocations — the R1 Fieldday is stricter in not allowing any operation from home or other permanent station facilities. Both events have traditionally served as the largest on-ramp to amateur radio contesting, mostly via club Field Day entries.

Experienced contesters can help increase the traffic on those on-ramps in several ways while operating out in the field, but if you are going to stay at home, I'd suggest the following tips:

1. Focus on Searching and Pouncing to answer those fledgling "CQ FD"s. Many new ops will try running for the first time during one of these Field Day events, and that first experience can be intoxicating — or traumatizing.

Slow down to match new operators' CW or speaking speed, ignore the "Please Copy" calls, and show them how it is done.

2. Take a kinder and gentler approach than you would in a real contest. Save the frequency fights for the other 49 weekends in the year (R1 SSB Fieldday is in September).
3. Setting up emergency power from home? Contact a local general-purpose ham club and offer drop-in operating time to members. This is a great time for newbies and seasoned hams alike to get more time on the air!
4. Send in your log — help the sponsor organizations show the volume of active ops out there. Submitting your log also assists with log checking, helping your fellow ops confirm contacts and catching operating errors that they can address in time for the next contest.

In recent years, I've mostly operated Field Day from home. Full disclosure: My past group efforts doing Field Day in the field were a lot of fun, but the contest bug did *not* bite any of the WA3s. Oddly enough, in recent years, FT8 has gotten one of them to



load *N1MM Logger+* and make a few contacts in digital and SSB events.

I can't write a column about Field Days without mentioning the long running "Is it a contest?" debate. My take has always been that an operating event without log adjudication is not a contest. So, by that metric, I think R1 Fieldday *does* qualify, while ARRL Field Day *does not*. But in my other big hobby, bicycling, clubs have riding "events" (group rides with no recorded times) and more formal races; however, in group rides, there are often "county-line" sprints, where informal competition can happen without scaring off the mainstream cyclists!



# AMATEUR RADIO

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