



FEEDBACK

The Official Newsletter of the
Georgian Bay Amateur Radio Club

September 2019

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This Month

Message from the President

[Field day 2019](#)

[HF Contesting Hints](#)

[Interesting Websites](#)

[Terry Fox Run 2019](#)

[Make GBARC your Firefox
Homepage](#)

[RAC Simulated Emergency Test](#)

[Distracted Driving Update](#)

[Letters to the Editor](#)

[The Last Word](#)

[2019 Executive](#)

PresidentTom VA3TVA

Vice-President... Frank VA3GUF

Treasurer.....Bobby VE3PAV

Secretary.....Peter VE3BBN

Message from the President



**Tom
VA3TVA**

CQ CQ CQ GBARC

Hi all. Once again, summer has come, and is nearly gone. I have had a crazy busy summer, with very little time for radio. But I did manage to slip in a few days of helping other hams with their tower projects.

Changing out antennas and feed lines, adding additional antennas. I made it out to the Bruce Peninsula Multi Sport, and to the Terry Fox Run. The only other radio related activity that I got up to this summer was the Hanover Haul. I am happy to say that our club put in a number in attendance.

With fall knocking on our doors, and towers. It's time to consider tower maintenance. It's far nicer to do that over the next couple of months, then to do it like I do, in the snow. Check the hardware and feed lines. The last three antennas that I took down for other hams had bolts that were broken, or near broken. They look great until I put a wrench to them. The wind and weather really takes their toll on them.

The club has lots on the horizon. Hopefully the weekly nets pick up. I haven't had the best attendance on them myself. But I'm hoping to do better. Our meetings start up again next week. I'm looking forward to seeing and talking with those that I have not had a chance to see since in may.

The club has been approached to provide communications for a new charity ride on the peninsula. I have invited them to give us a wee talk at the meeting and to introduce themselves to us. More information about them can be found on their web sight. www.brucegravelfondo.com/

Well. That's all that I have for now. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the meeting next Tuesday.

Field Day 2019

Field Day has come and gone for another year, this year the weather was great and the bands did not disappoint. We were at the west side of Victoria Park in Owen Sound with 3 stations, one station by Frank VA3GUF and one by Tom VA3TS. The tri-band beam for 20/15 and 10 and our [double extended zepp](#) for 160, 80 and 40 performed well.

| Band | Mode | QSOs | Pts | Pt/Q |
|------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1.8 | LSB | 1 | 1 | 1.0 |
| 3.5 | CW | 19 | 38 | 2.0 |
| 3.5 | LSB | 32 | 32 | 1.0 |
| 7 | CW | 151 | 302 | 2.0 |
| 7 | LSB | 7 | 7 | 1.0 |
| 14 | CW | 21 | 42 | 2.0 |
| 14 | USB | 66 | 66 | 1.0 |
| Total | Both | 297 | 488 | 1.6 |
| Score: 976 | | | | |
| 1 Mult = 1.0 Q's | | | | |

The 2 stations shared the antennas. Adam VE3IZS had a third station using a terminated sloping dipole and made the majority of the cw contacts. Thanks to all the participated and stopped by. All stations were at 100 watts.

| Operator | 1.8 | 3.5 | 7 | 14 | Tot | Accum |
|--------------|----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| VA3GUF | | | | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| VA3KOT | | | | 3 | 3 | 17 |
| VA3TS | | 17 | 3 | 13 | 33 | 50 |
| VE3IZS | | 19 | 151 | 21 | 191 | 241 |
| VE3JMD | | | | 3 | 3 | 244 |
| VE3MIO | | | | 1 | 1 | 245 |
| VE3PAV | | 8 | | 32 | 40 | 285 |
| VE3QVC | | 3 | | | 3 | 288 |
| VE3RQY | 1 | 4 | 4 | | 9 | 297 |
| Total | 1 | 51 | 158 | 87 | 297 | 297 |



Attendees VA3GUF Frank VE3BBN Peter VE3PAV Bobby VA3TS Tom VE3IZS Adam VE3BQM Bernie VA3KOT John VE3QVC Phillip VE3YNO Marie-Claude VE3MIO Maureen VE3RQY Greg VE3JMD Jim VE3BAK Dave VE3OZW Richard VE3MPG Bob VE3IDS Don and VE3DNY Dan. Guests were VA3MFO Jim and VE3XBO Bart.



L-R John VA3KOT, Maureen VE3MIO



HF Contesting Hints

By Chris Tran, GM3WOJ/ZL1CT

Many newcomers to ham radio are unfamiliar with HF Contest operations. Based on years of successful contesting, Chris explains how to get started.

Why enter an HF contest?

Well, they are a test of your operating and technical skill, competitiveness, stamina, propagation knowledge, keyboard skills, equipment and antenna reliability etc. etc. and always they are great fun !

Here's some help to get started ...

Operating

1. **Whatever you do, do it quickly!** - in non-contest operating, about 80% of what we say into a microphone is un-necessary information - in a contest this is even more important. For example, it is particularly bad operating to give long CQ calls (except occasionally in VHF/UHF contests) - if your signal is strong, many stations will be standing by to call you, and will just be frustrated if you give lengthy calls, and may not wait. In major HF contests, you can simply say "Golf Mike Seven Victor" once (don't even bother to say 'CQ' except every 4th or 5th call) and stations will call you. The speed of operating has increased considerably in recent years, for a variety of reasons, and contest exchanges have been reduced to the minimum required. You can assume that the other station is glad to have worked you - never say "thanks for the QSO OM, good luck in the contest" - this is an utter waste of time (you probably don't mean it anyway!) - on most occasions a simple "thanks" is sufficient.
2. **Practice operating** - if you are new to contesting, or if you are not confident about working stations quickly, enter a few contests from home as a single operator - you will be the only person to judge how well you are doing, and you can set yourself some targets e.g. 500 QSOs on 15m or similar - not too ambitious at first. By listening to some of the world's top operators in action, you can learn a lot more than by listening to some pundit in the local club whose techniques date from the 1970s! (Listen to EA8BH (N5TJ) or ZD8Z (N6TJ) - Jeff N5TJ is arguably the top phone operator in the world at the moment, working over 10000 stations in 48 hours as a single-operator!) Know when to fight to keep a frequency and when to QSY quickly. Choose the phonetics for your callsign carefully. Practise listening to heavily-accented English.
3. **Know your equipment/software/antennas** - again time is wasted if you don't know how to operate your rig properly, how to minimise interference, how to 'grab' cluster spots, which antenna is best for a particular direction, etc. Operating conditions in a contest are very



different to day-to-day operation, so practise using your rig in high-QRM situations. Practise keyboard skills - all contest stations should now use computer logging, and the quicker you can type and correct errors the better.

4. **Know the bands** - if you've decided to enter a 160m contest, for example, spend several weeks listening/working on 160m before the contest to learn about propagation, bandplan, etc. Also contact friends who use 160m regularly and ask their advice on what to expect at particular times of day, etc. Check propagation predictions. Be prepared for unexpected propagation paths - often the increased activity (especially with high-power contest stations) makes it possible to work unusual paths.
5. **Make an operating plan** - even if it's in your head, plan what to do for the whole 24/48 hours of the contest - on paper you can divide the day into hour-long 'slots', and write down (after studying old logs, etc) what you might expect to work in each hour. When you get tired, this plan will help optimise your results. Plan rest-breaks at low-activity times of day. Memorise prefixes to save time.
6. **Choose the correct contest or section to enter** - HF contests have many different sections, and with relatively few GM/MM stations entering contests, you should be able to win a certificate if you choose a particular contest or contest section e.g. 15m CW Low-power, 40m SSB High-power, etc.
7. **Get fit!** - contesting is tiring - sitting for hours on end is bad for you - some operators jump up and down and wave their arms periodically while operating (!) to keep their circulation going (and avoid DVT!) Make sure there is plenty of fresh air in the shack, bright lighting, and drink plenty (non-alcoholic before/during the contest, alcoholic after!) Make sure where you sleep is well away from bellowing operators or thundering generators!
8. **Watch the meters!** - ask the owner of the equipment how to tune the amplifier, what the anode/grid currents, power outputs, etc should be. Check the meter readings regularly, especially if you are changing bands regularly. Stop transmitting and investigate any unusual readings before something burns out.
9. **Team Player** - If you're going to be part of a team, leave your ego at home - each of us thinks that we are fairly efficient operators, but a team effort needs a team approach, not a bunch of self-styled "Scotland's no.1 DX ers" all vying for status - this is useless! We all have individual strengths and weaknesses - the team should exploit the strengths and minimise the weaknesses. Don't be afraid to say "I'm not sure what you expect me to do" or "what should I expect to work at this time of day?" or to make suggestions based on your experience.

Equipment and Software

1. **Good equipment** - use the best equipment you can afford - HF contesting can be as cheap or as expensive as you want to make it - a good operator will achieve good results with a modest station, but obviously for national/international success you will need to invest in equipment, computers, antennas, etc. and have a suitable site to install the station. For multitransmitter set-ups, bandpass filters are essential, and other techniques may be needed to reduce any inter-station QRM.
2. **Use the station before the contest** - reliability is increased considerably if you set up the station well in advance, and use it regularly - faults/problems can be eliminated e.g. r.f. pickup in

computers etc. In 'field-day' contests, try to use someone's complete station which is used regularly at home rather than a hotch-potch of many different stations.

3. **Choice of transceiver** - many widely-advertised HF transceivers work well for day-to-day QSOs, but are nearly useless under HF contest conditions. You need really good RX frontend performance, and good I.F. filtering - in my experience DSP is almost useless for improving readability of SSB signals - if there is local inter-station QRM from a nearby transmitter on another band, DSP may try to 'interpret' the audio components, and actually makes readability worse! DSP only does one thing well - 'Tracking Auto-notch' removal of carriers is spectacularly effective! For SSB, buy a 1.8kHz or 2.0kHz filter (for the 1st 8.2MHz IF) and for CW buy a 250Hz filter (you will hear about 4 QSOs at once with the average 500Hz filter!) The major manufacturers cannot make these extra filters with good shape factors - buy them from some of the specialist American suppliers.
4. **Choice of amplifier** - most HF amplifiers are not designed for the stress of a 24 or 48-hour contest - generally they are not properly cooled. Ensure that your amplifier is positioned so that it gets a supply of cold air, not recycled heat. Fit an extra fan, especially to cool the transformer and other p.s.u. components. If the amplifier is slightly under-run it will be more reliable.
5. **Station accessories/set-up** - for SSB, you will need 'hands-free' operation - a headset and a footswitch - ideally the footswitch should switch the amplifier which in turns switches the transceiver, this is usually faster. A 'Voice-keyer' conserves your voice when the band is quiet, and allows you to keep up a high TX/RX ratio - there is however a school of thought that if you are using a voice keyer on some bands you are not working enough stations ! For CW, you should be using the computer keyboard to work stations, with a keyer/paddle in parallel for slower QSOs or for other exchanges. Get a (not-too) comfortable operating chair, and lay out the keyboard/transceiver etc at a distance/height which doesn't give you aches and pains after a few hours of operating. Make sure you can see the dials, monitor, meters etc without having to move much.
6. **Choice of software** - there are a wide variety of contest-logging programs, which all basically do the same job - they log the QSOs, allow you to check for 'dupes', keep track of your QSO rate, countries worked, etc. Before you buy software, make sure you try it - does it do what you need it to do? - for example one 'highly-recommended' logging program does not allow you to type on the keyboard while it is sending CW - this is a really annoying deficiency. Memorise common software commands, and have large wall-charts listing all commands/keystrokes. Make sure all operators know what to do if the software 'crashes'.

Antennas and Feeders

1. **Use the best antenna you can** - antennas are the key to success in all aspects of our hobby - for contesting they are the deciding factor. If possible, use computer-optimised monoband beams for 40m-10m and phased antennas like the 4-square for 80m, and seriously high antennas for 160m. For 160m in particular, antenna height is crucial. Install and test the antenna weeks before the contest. If possible, avoid using antennas that need matching in the shack with an a.t.u. - any antenna tuner introduces losses, and it is difficult to run high power with an a.t.u.
2. **Use the best feeder** - RG213U as a minimum and ideally LDF4-50 Heliac - never use RG58 for any antenna ! Use the minimum number of connectors in your feeder system. Open-wire feeders have very low losses, but are often not practical, and need an a.t.u. Test the feeders



regularly - feed 10W of RF in one end and check how much reaches the other end - for about 100' of feeder at 28 MHz : LDF4-50 = more than 8W : RG213U = 6W approximately.

3. **Check the performance of antennas** - test the SWR and check (for a beam) the gain/ frontto-back if possible - keep a written/graphical note of the readings to allow you to compare the antenna performance later.

73 and good luck

Chris, GM3WOJ/ZL1CT

Websites of Interest Copy/Paste the urls below into your browser

Winlink on your browser

<https://sec-mi.blogspot.com/2019/06/winlink-on-your-browser.html>

UI-View Updated 2018

<https://www.apritch.co.uk/uiview.htm>

Raspberry PI 4

<https://www.tomshardware.com/reviews/raspberry-pi-4-b,6193.html>

How to Handle Common Issues with USB to RS-232 Adapter Cables

<https://www.campbellsci.com/blog/usb-rs-232-adapter-cable-issues>

QRP Homebuilder

<https://nt7s.com/files/QRPHomebuilder.pdf>

YAAC - "Yet Another APRS Client"

<http://www.ka2ddo.org/ka2ddo/YAAC.html>

Smith Chart program

<http://www.w0qe.com/SimSmith.html>

Antennas 101

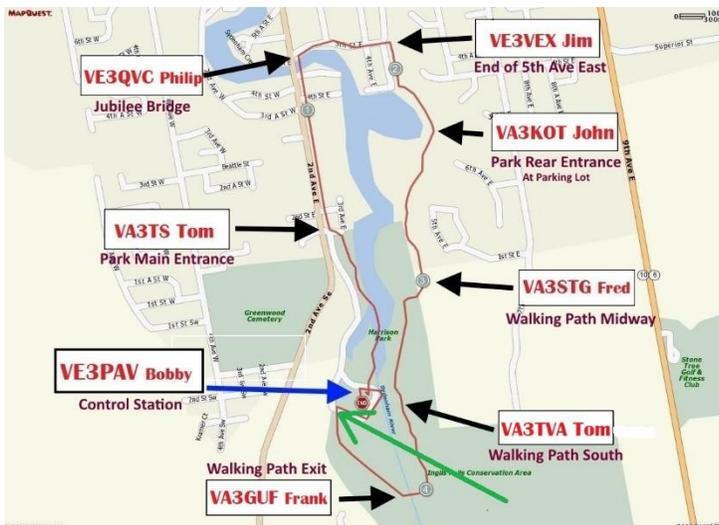
https://w4bfb.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/presentations/antennas_101.pdf

*Welcome to John VA3KOT, new to
our area and the club.*



Terry Fox 2019

The day started out with some rain, on and off for most of the duration of the run. We were in position by 9:45am and called in to the net control station VE3PAV Bobby. The runners numbered some 170 participants and in spite of the wet weather there were many friendly comments and thanks to the club for our help. The run coordinator Ann Vos, had everything running smoothly. There was a doctor on site as well as the paramedics from the Owen Sound Fire Dept. So a big thanks to all who participated and not only our group. Ann Vos reports that some \$17K was raised to support cancer research. Afterwards we met at the local coffee shop for lunch and chat. And...it stopped raining and the rest of the day was nice...73



L-R Ray, Fred VA3STG, Tom VA3TS, Tom VA3TVA, Philip VE3QVC, Frank VA3GUF, Bobby VE3PAV, John VA3KOT and Jim VE3VEX

RAC Simulated Emergency Test October 12th

The Simulated Emergency Test is a North America-wide exercise in emergency communications, administered by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL) and the RAC Emergency Coordinators (EC) and Net Managers (NM).

<https://wp.rac.ca/simulated-emergency-test/>

Amateur Radio and Distracted Driving in Ontario - Recent Development

To All Amateur Radio Clubs in Ontario-South:

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation has opened a 45-day consultation period to examine the possibility of making the time-limited exemption we enjoy under O. Reg. 366/09 that allows us to operate mobile permanent. The RAC Bulletin on this matter can be [found here](#). All Amateur Radio operators and clubs in Ontario are encouraged to enter their comments [on their website](#). Radio Amateurs of Canada will be providing an official response as a stakeholder shortly. Have a great day!

Phil A. McBride, VA3QR / VA3KPJ, CEC

Director - Ontario South, Radio Amateurs of/du Canada

E-Mail: va3qr@rac.ca / Twitter: [@VA3QR](https://twitter.com/VA3QR)

Make GBARC your Firefox Homepage

With this, whenever you start firefox, then the GBARC homepage will automatically load. And you can use this for any webpage, not just ours. In the picture below, grab the tab icon above the left red arrow with your mouse click and drag it to the house icon and let go of the mouse button. That's it. Exit firefox and restart it. This will vary depending on the browser you use.

The screenshot shows a Firefox browser window with the following elements:

- Tab: Georgian Bay Amateur Radio
- Address Bar: <https://gbarc.ca>
- Navigation: Back, Forward, Refresh, Home icons
- Most Visited: dB calculator for ampl...
- Page Content:
 - Logo: GEORGIAN BAY AMATEUR RADIO CLUB VE3OSR
 - Text: The Georgian Bay P.O. Box 113, Owen Sound Copyright © 197
 - Footer: We are an amateur radio group catering for those with an in

Letters to the Editor

Great day here on Prince Edward Island. I swing my yagi into the west and chat with a sorts of VE3's but do not hear many GBARC'ers. I connect to VE3OSR via echolink and call, with no replies. Wondering where every one is.... So CQ GBARC from VY2NX in PEI. I am going to put up 20 dollars for grabs to the first GBARC member to log me in on VHF and HF 4 times in the months of July/August 2019. I work 20, 40, and 80 on HF. And connect to VE3OSR on a regular basis and work 6 meters. On the contact, you will require to give me a signal report and a "I AM A GBARC MEMBER." I will give you back a serial number.



Bob VY2NX

The Last Word



A few words of appreciation to those that contribute to this newsletter by submitting news stories or interesting web links or ideas. If you have something then send it to contact@gbarc.ca , any format, any size, anytime, but if you want it to appear in the current months newsletter, then send it by the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Help US Out *Would you like to receive email notifications when this newsletter is posted? Sign up for our mailing list. We only send out a few mailings a month and you can unsubscribe at any time. No ads and no personal information, your email address is never shared with anyone else.*

<https://www.gbarc.ca/lists/?p=subscribe>

Membership for details regarding membership in the club go to:

<https://www.gbarc.ca/gbarcmembers.php>

The next newsletter will be in October.