2017 ARRL International DX CW Contest Results

Two tales of competition, decision making, and the strong desire to rest.

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In 2016, Tom, W2SC, returned from a decade-long absence to win the ARRL International DX CW Contest in grand fashion, trouncing his nearest rival by nearly a million points. On the first weekend of February in 2017, Nate, N4YDU, set out to make sure it wasn't so easy this time.

Contest Rivalries

Knowing he had to perfect dual-radio CQs — essentially running two pileups at once — Nate spent months leading up to his trip to TI5W in Costa Rica practicing with a pair of computer programs. It all nearly paid off.

"I prepped for it for several months using the *DXLog* and *Morse Runner* combo," Nate said. "While I felt prepared after months of practice, I was still a bit unsure of myself." It was the same strategy at 8P5A, where Tom was also running alternating pileups.

There is no competition in the world outside of radiosport that welcomes players with any level of talent or equipment and puts them all on the same playing field. Whether you're borrowing TI5W or pitting yourself against your friend's tribander on a city lot, you can always find a rivalry and spice up the competition.

Tom knows why he heads to Barbados to play. He said, "The goal of 8P5A is to win contests." That was the opening statement for his presentation at this year's Dayton Hamvention Contest Forum. He is no stranger to winning. From Barbados and from other locations, he has frequently been on top of the Single Operator, High Power category in several major DX

Work the Full Results

The full results of the contest are available online at **www.arrl.org/contest-results-articles**. You'll find detailed analysis and more play-by-play, along with the full line scores. Improve your skill by reviewing your log-checking report, too!

Sandy, DL1QQ, made the trip from Germany to western Pennsylvania so she could operate the 80-meter position at K3LR. Sandy and band-partner Phil, K3UA, made 959 contacts in 104 DXCC entities on the band over the weekend! [Ward Silver, NØAX, photo]

Nate, N4YDU, doing a final run-through at TI5W, just moments before the contest began. The station, located in Bijagua, Costa Rica, is on the north slope of the Tenorio Volcano. [Kam Sirageldin, N3KS, photo]

Top Ten

US

Single Operator, High Power

K3CR (LZ4AX, op)	5,652,240
K1ZZ	5,520,138
W1UE	4,848,000
VY2TT (K6LA, op)	4,696,230
AA1K	4,353,396
N1UR	4,224,042
KQ2M	4,150,440
N4AF	4,138,992
N1RR (@ K6ND)	3,729,663
N2IC	3,357,459

Single Operator, Low Power

N8II	1,663,101
K5KU	1,515,240
VE3VN	1,386,072
N4TB	1,083,840
W0UO	1,068,210
KJ4QHL	1,031,658
W2TZ	890,928
K1VSJ	886,356
K2LNS	803,772
K9QVB	676,929

Single Operator, QRP

N1IX	813,267
K8CN	440,100
N7IR	329,130
W6JTI	210,168
K2YAZ	193,290
N4CF	170,796
KT8K	165,240
W6QU (W8QZA, op)	155,946
WR3R	137,808
KU1N	109,737

Single Operator Unlimited, High Power

KI1G	6,632,487
AA3B	6,287,760
K3WW	6,120,918
N3RS	5,268,468
WA1Z	4,829,721
KV2K (K2NG, op)	4,700,262
AB3CX	4,662,684
K1XM	4,573,536
KF3B	4,242,228
VA2WA	4,226,184

Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power

VA3DF	1,640,100
W3KB	1,476,720
N2AN (WC4E/1, op)	1,404,360
WO1N	1,282,272
VO1HP	1,272,375
WW3S	1,209,840
KG4V (N1EN, op)	1,181,895
W9XT	1,174,950
N2SQW	920,304
KA2D	713,700

Single Operator Unlimited, QRP

K3TW	129,417
K8ZT	99,267
KR4AE	91,332
N2CQ	72,369
K2AL	31,347
K2GMY	28,980
KC4ZA	15,996
KB0KFX	6,750
W4QO	5,775
NK9I	1,026

Single Operator, 160 Meters

K7GM	44,736
K1WHS	43,044
W1NT	40,320
W4ZV	36,720
WF2W	31,110
W2VO	16,296
W8RT (W8UVZ, op)	14,418
AG4W	13,932
W4AA	13,104
N2GC	11,562

Single Operator, 80 Meters

K4ZW	185,571
W3BGN	150,306
K5RX	117,045
N6SS	69,804
VE3PN	55,638
K4FJ	55,500
W1HI	42,600
K3TM	39,552
AI4WW	38,763
K9KU	38,367

Single Operator, 40 Meters

K1ZM	591,840
N2MF	570,114
KD2RD	465,975
K9OM	315,423
W7XI (N6CW, op)	225,984
K1JB	209,391
K9NR	187,824
W4NZ	150,588
K1IR	148,656
W1XX	135,108

Single Operator, 20 Meters

KU2M	612,573
W2UP	582,360
KV0Q	439,803
K9BGL	428,328
W7WA	356,400
W8WA	262,341
KJ5Y (MM0LID, op)	240,732
N9CO	228,726
W9ILY	125,400
N4IJ	125,280

Single Operator, 15 Meters

K4OAQ	307,530
K2SSS	285,705
W3EP	147,384
W2AW (N2GM, op)	120,615
W6YA	120,042
WB4TDH	115,584
KZ5J	51,336
VE9AA	27,852
N0OK	18,972
KN1H	15,582

Single Operator, 10 Meters

K4WI	3,816
WA2AOG	2,820
WO2N	1,479
N1CGP	1,248
WB2AMU	981
AA4NP	924
N0JK	897
KJ4IWZ	36
KN4JN	27

Multioperator, Single Transmitter, High Power

N4WW	4,603,500
N1MM	4,351,392
W5MX	3,580,170
K3PH	2,993,949
K6LL	1,987,536
W8TK	1,939,677
VE2BWL	1,537,956
K5UA	1,283,865
K7RI	927,216
KA1IOR	875,052

Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power

N2WKS	2,705,556
W1NY	2,299,584
AB4B	1,847,373
W3YI	456,807
K0UK	388,020
N1SOH	383,040
WD9EXD	55,257
KB5ENP	22,365
W8UM	13,122

Multioperator, Two Transmitter

W2FU	8,295,255
K9CT	6,636,960
W9SN	6,108,480
K8AZ	5,880,336
VE3JM	5,797,728
K2QMF	5,712,120
N0NI	5,553,036
W2CG	3,631,758
N7AT	3,442,674
VE3YAA	3,100,626

Multioperator, Multitransmitter

W3LPL	11,982,705
K3LR	11,766,090
WE3C	10,886,265
NR4M	9,814,821
N1TA	8,891,100
W4RM	7,061,376
N2NT	4,829,760
W5RU	3,976,179
WG3J	3,749,460
K5TR	3,481,959

DX

Single Operator, High Power

8P5A	6,813,876
TI5W (N4YDU, op)	6,685,536
6Y2T (VE3DZ, op)	5,398,860
V43Z (NP4Z, op)	4,636,608
NP2P	3,341,580
KH7M (NA2U, op)	3,192,420
KH7Q (N6TJ, op)	3,063,600
PS2T (PY2ZEA, op)	2,633,241
WP3R (K4ZA, op)	2,500,338
IS0/OM8A (OM3RM, op)	2,328,390

Single Operator, Low Power

ZF9CW	4,268,664
WP3C	3,489,486
NP3X (WP3A, op)	3,446,583
NP3A	3,008,238
VP9/W6PH	2,980,458
VP5M (K4QPL, op)	2,484,753
HC1WBT (W0OR, op)	1,699,320
PY2NY	1,381,800
HI3Y	1,316,160
EA8CN	968,430

Single Operator, QRP

HB9BMY	318,588
EF7AAW	101,202
HA3MY	78,120
JH4UYB	76,788
LZ2RS	62,694
5W1SA	50,787
JH1OGC	49,896
IK1XPK	46,350
HA5BA	41,400
OK5WF	36,636

Single Operator Unlimited, High Power

D4C (YL2KL, op)	4,844,232
V26M (N3AD, op)	4,251,792
EF6T (EA3AIR, op)	2,516,844
LX7I (DL5SE, op)	2,364,255
G5W (G3BJ, op)	2,358,528
IR2C (IK2JUB, op)	2,226,792
IO4T	2,186,712
SN7Q (SP7GIQ, op)	2,048,445
HG3R	1,976,115
CE2MVF	1,921,788

Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power

P40W (W2GD, op)	4,347,750
CN8KD	1,020,036
EC4TA	945,009
PS8HF	904,800
UZ3A (UX1AA, op)	587,367
S57KM	564,453
S56A	398,505
SN7O (SP7IVO, op)	363,699
HA5PP	310,023
Z33C	289,872

Single Operator Unlimited, QRP

OK2FD	220,350
IZ3NVR	219,492
ON6NL	164,808
CX4SS	81,954
EA1AER	48,840
IW3ILM	24,624
F5IYJ	11,466
SM0LPO	9,696
JH3WKE	9,216
E72MD	8,829

Single Operator, 160 Meters

XE2X	110,979
C6AKQ (N4BP, op)	110,544
NP2J	107,217
9A5CW	36,408
SN2M (SP2XF, op)	31,236
OK3C (OK2ZC, op)	27,432
IK2CLB	26,793
F6ARC	23,415
G3LET	22,890
DJ0MDR	16,137

Single Operator, 80 Meters

4M1K (YV1KK, op)	195,120
HC2AO	176,823
TM5Y (F8DBF, op)	166,518
CT9/UA9CDC (UA9CDC, op)	144,594
MW5B	139,125
TM5X (F6AGM, op)	120,528
OM2VL	109,350
NP2L	100,320
CO2AN	96,096
KH6/WB4JTT (WB4JTT, op)	91,176

Single Operator, 40 Meters

TM6M (F1AKK, op)	287,100
EF7X (EA7KW, op)	280,539
S52AW	259,920
C6AUM	241,926
IR1Y (IK1YDB, op)	238,680
OM7M (OM5RM, op)	236,340
OM7JG	213,639
YT7A (YU7DW, op)	212,400
US1I (UX2IO, op)	210,267
SP3GEM (SP3HLM, op)	207,540

Single Operator, 20 Meters

FY5KE (F6FVY, op)	442,680
CS2C (OK1RF, op)	379,359
MM2N (MM0GPZ, op)	231,861
CO2JD	231,129
EA8KW	225,900
C6ARU (N4UM, op)	205,692
OF8L (OH8LQ, op)	204,120
HA7GN	195,810
S50Q (S50R, op)	189,222
IZ1YPF	188,124

Single Operator, 15 Meters

TO1A	326,655
CW4MAX (CX2DK, op)	296,826
PP5NY	289,440
CT9/R9DX (R9DX, op)	227,700
PJ6T (NM1Y, op)	165,996
PY2DV	114,696
CO8LY	82,839
EA2LU	82,212
OK3RM	70,752
HG0R (HA0NAR, op)	67,482

Single Operator, 10 Meters

XR2K (CE2LML/CX1EK, op)	138,852
TI8/AA8HH	89,376
HK1MW	30,573

Multioperator, Single Transmitter, High Power

ZF1A	5,808,057
P40L	5,526,150
VP5K	4,299,075
CW5W	3,865,749
PW2D	3,556,014
J75Y	3,001,440
CE3AA	2,150,700
DK8ZB	1,726,866
DL1A	1,726,272
HG1S	1,605,870

Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power

V3T	4,794,258
VP2MVV	4,760,592
5J0NA	2,466,672
CO8ZZ	2,100,006
TM7X	962,910
PY2KC	238,128
F8KLY	222,138
2E0SDV	65,136
YO3GNF	34,983
UR4RWW	23,616

Multioperator, Two Transmitter

P40R	7,518,000
KP2M	7,135,014
NP2N	6,437,220
CR3W	5,499,900
EI7M	4,021,209
HG7T	2,189,169
V3M	2,059,992
SN8B	1,826,280
ZL3X	1,500,681
RU1A	1,222,368

Multioperator, Multitransmitter

PJ4X	9,458,922
PJ2T	9,216,720
KH6LC	6,374,400
TO7A (UT5UGR, op)	6,044,046
9A1A	3,598,056
KL7RA	2,823,660
RW2F	1,944,585
JA3YBK	1,531,476
PY4XX	77,976

contests. However, due to work commitments, he couldn't participate in the ARRL International DX CW contest for a decade, but he stormed back last year for his nearly million-point Single Operator, High Power win.

Across the Caribbean on a hilltop overlooking the Costa Rican jungle, Nate was warming up TI5W, the contest station belonging to Kam, N3KS. Nate would be Tom's main competitor in this struggle for the top spot. The showdown between these seasoned contesters would come down to decisions about

Continental Winners

Africa		
Single Operator, Low Power	EA8CN	968,430
Single Operator Unlimited, High Power	D4C (YL2KL, op)	4,844,232
Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power	CN8KD	1,020,036
Single Operator, 80 Meters	CT9/UA9CDC (UA9CDC, op)	144,594
Single Operator, 40 Meters	EA8ZS	144,540
Single Operator, 20 Meters	EA8KW	225,900
Single Operator, 15 Meters	CT9/R9DX (R9DX, op)	227,700
Multioperator, Two Transmitter	CR3W	5,499,900
Antarctica		
Single Operator, High Power	RI1AND (RW1AI, op)	612
Single Operator, 20 Meters	RI1ANC	31,860
Asia		
Single Operator, High Power	JH1GBZ (JH5GHM, op)	685,122
Single Operator, Low Power	JI1RXQ	181,440
Single Operator, QRP	JH4UYB	76,788
Single Operator Unlimited, High Power	P3X (UT5UDX, op)	1,229,832
Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power	JH1EAQ	221,430
Single Operator Unlimited, QRP	JH3WKE	9,216
Single Operator, 160 Meters	JA8WKE	1,350
Single Operator, 80 Meters	JH7XMO	22,113
Single Operator, 40 Meters	TA3D	154,230
Single Operator, 20 Meters	7M4CLF	72,696
Single Operator, 15 Meters	JA7FTR	43,974
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, High Power	JA0QNJ	710,640
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power	JK2VOC	10,914
Multioperator, Two Transmitter	JE1CKA	657,720
Multioperator, Multitransmitter	JA3YBK	1,531,476
Europe		
Single Operator, High Power	IS0/OM8A (OM3RM, op)	2,328,390
Single Operator, Low Power	IK1JJM	364,752
Single Operator, QRP	HB9BMY	318,588
Single Operator Unlimited, High Power	EF6T (EA3AIR, op)	2,516,844
Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power	EC4TA	945,009
Single Operator Unlimited, QRP	OK2FD	220,350
Single Operator, 160 Meters	9A5CW	36,408
Single Operator, 80 Meters	TM5Y (F8DBF, op)	166,518
Single Operator, 40 Meters	TM6M (F1AKK, op)	287,100
Single Operator, 20 Meters	CS2C (OK1RF, op)	379,359
Single Operator, 15 Meters	EA2LU	82,212
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, High Power	DK8ZB	1,726,866
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power	TM7X	962,910
Multioperator, Two Transmitter	EI7M	4,021,209
Multioperator, Multitransmitter	9A1A	3,598,056
North America		
Single Operator, High Power	8P5A	6,813,876
Single Operator, Low Power	ZF9CW	4,268,664
Single Operator Unlimited, High Power	V26M (N3AD, op)	4,251,792
Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power	KL4SD (WL7F, op)	260,640
Single Operator, 160 Meters	XE2X	110,979
Single Operator, 80 Meters	NP2L	100,320
Single Operator, 40 Meters	C6AUM	241,926
Single Operator, 20 Meters	CO2JD	231,129
Single Operator, 15 Meters	PJ6T (NM1Y, op)	165,996
Single Operator, 10 Meters	TI8/AA8HH	89,376
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, High Power	ZF1A	5,808,057
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power	V3T	4,794,258
Multioperator, Two Transmitter	KP2M	7,135,014
Multioperator, Multitransmitter	TO7A (UT5UGR, op)	6,044,046
Oceania		
Single Operator, High Power	KH7M (NA2U, op)	3,192,420
Single Operator, Low Power	A31MM (JA6WFM, op)	608,391
Single Operator, QRP	5W1SA	50,787
Single Operator Unlimited, High Power	E51DWC (OK1DWC, op)	1,522,095
Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power	VK4ACN	30,780
Single Operator, 80 Meters	KH6/WB4JTT (WB4JTT, op)	91,176
Single Operator, 40 Meters	VK4SN	22,836
Single Operator, 20 Meters	YB5BOY	6
Single Operator, 15 Meters	YC8UP	2,310
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, High Power	ZM4T	1,599,312
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power	YE1R	18,450
Multioperator, Two Transmitter	ZL3X	1,500,681
Multioperator, Multitransmitter	KH6LC	6,374,400
South America		
Single Operator, High Power	PS2T (PY2ZEA, op)	2,633,241
Single Operator, Low Power	HC1WBT (WØOR, op)	1,699,320
Single Operator Unlimited, High Power	CE2MVF	1,921,788
Single Operator Unlimited, Low Power	P40W (W2GD, op)	4,347,750
Single Operator Unlimited, QRP	CX4SS	81,954
Single Operator, 160 Meters	PV8DX	330
Single Operator, 80 Meters	4M1K (YV1KK, op)	195,120
Single Operator, 40 Meters	YV5LAY	112,005
Single Operator, 20 Meters	FY5KE (F6FVY, op)	442,680
Single Operator, 15 Meters	TO1A	326,655
Single Operator, 10 Meters	XR2K (CE2LML/CX1EK, op)	138,852
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, High Power	P40L	5,526,150
Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power	PY2KC	238,128
Multioperator, Two Transmitter	P40R	7,518,000
Multioperator, Multitransmitter	PJ4X	9,458,922

when to run and when to rest.

Meanwhile, more than 2,000 miles away from TI5W and 8P5A, in the northeastern United States, a different kind of match was heating up between two stations, in two states, in the Multioperator, Single Transmitter, Low Power category. In northern New Jersey, the N2WKS team consisting of Jay, K2TTT; Zev, N2WKS, and Justin, NE2V, would operate from Jay's station. While in western Massachusetts, Jim, KK1W; Frandy, N1FJ, and Matt, W1MSW, were operating as W1NY from Jim's station.

Seen here relaxing, the P40R crew took the top spot for DX Multioperator, Two Transmitter. From left to right are Mike Wetzel, W9RE; Dan Street, K1TO; Scott Jasper, NE9U, and Ron Feutz, KK9K. [Scott Jasper, NE9U, photo]

Getting Prepared

Tom arrived at 8P5A to find a broken rotator and a spare that was also not working, but he successfully repaired both and installed one before the start of the contest. Because the station is fully automated, verifying that all software is in good order is important. This automation allows him to adjust equipment from the software rather than reaching over to devices to make changes, which enables him to keep his hands on the keyboard and use a method of operating known as "dueling" or "alternating" CQs.

TI5W also needed repairs to its full-size 160-meter loop antenna. With the help of Kam's quadcopter, the antenna was successfully hoisted back into a 175-foot tree. Nate wasn't entirely convinced his practice on the computer was enough, but fortunately, "testing on Thurs-

Zev, N2WKS, taking advantage of the unseasonably warm weather this winter to make major repairs to the 80-meter two-element vertical-phased array at K2TTT. [Jay Rodaman, K2TTT, photo]

day proved to be successful while running pileups on two bands. As the contest got closer, I began to get more anxious, but I was really ready to get the show started."

During the unseasonably warm month leading up the contest, the N2WKS and W1NY teams also went about their respective repairs — a two-element, 80-meter array here, or a broken rotator on a 40-meter beam there.

Off to the Races

After the contest began at 0000Z on Saturday, 8P5A and TI5W started up without any glitches. Although it was his first time alternating CQs, by the end of the first hour, Nate had established a lead in contacts over Tom.

Tom felt he had a favorable start with a couple of good hours on Saturday, but activity seemed to be down a bit this year. Decent propagation during ARRL DX CW was certainly the exception this contest season when compared to the other DX contests. While conditions were decent all the way through 15 meters, Tom said he "paid special attention to maximizing time on 10 meters, as it was an opportunity relative to my competitors to the north, and a vulnerability to my competitors to the south and west." But Nate was also keeping an eye on 10 meters and making plenty of contacts on that band as well.

Back in New Jersey and Massachusetts, the N2WKS/W1NY battle was off to a good start. For real-time motivation, W1NY configured the logging software to interface with the **www.cqcontest.net** live scoreboard and score updates were being pushed out at regular intervals. Throughout Saturday, W1NY was the only US or Canadian station listed in the category, so motivation had to be gleaned from the scores of other low-power categories. [*Live scoreboards are optional, so they aren't necessarily inclusive of all stations in the contest — Ed.*]

At N2WKS, Justin operated the first 24 hours and Zev took over around 0012Z. When he sat down, Zev realized that they were not listed on the scoreboard due to a configuration error. Zev quickly adjusted the settings and worked frantically to try and close the gap between their score and that of W1NY. Meanwhile, no one at W1NY had noticed N2WKS had popped up on the scoreboard. Later in the evening, due to exhaustion, miscommunication, and an alarm misconfiguration, W1NY went silent for several hours in the middle of the night. When Matt fired up for New England's European opening on the higher bands, he noticed N2WKS was now listed and had five more multipliers and the exact same number of contacts. The race was on!

Live Contest Scoreboard on cqcontest.net

Growing in popularity each year, the **cqcontest.net** live scoreboard is a great way to enjoy nearly real-time updates and see how you stack up against other stations in a contest. It's easy to configure in most major contest logging software, and updates are pushed out from your computer in regular intervals to the website. To see what's happening in the latest contest or to find configuration settings for your logging software, visit **www.cqcontest.net**.

W1NY tried desperately to catch up with N2WKS. Meanwhile, the N2WKS team continued to build its lead. Whether it was propagation, operating skill, station design, or a combination of everything, the W1NY team just couldn't keep the same pace, and in the end, N2WKS had established a healthy lead of more than 200 contacts and 30 multipliers.

To Rest or Not to Rest?

In Costa Rica, Nate had planned to operate the entire 48-hour contest, but was also concerned about maintaining the concentration required to operate two radios at once. His concerns became reality when his mind was wandering and unable to concentrate on the second night. Although his rate was still decent, he decided to take two 90-minute breaks. In contrast, Tom had no zero-contact hours, and it was during Nate's breaks that he established an insurmountable lead. Nate made a late charge, but Tom won the category with three fewer multipliers and 141 more contacts.

Your Takeaway

Whether your goal is competing against other stations or yourself, having a plan before going into a contest is a critical step in developing a competitive station. Start putting together your plans for the upcoming contest season and make sure to mark your calendar for the next ARRL International DX CW contest, February 17 – 18, 2018.