Hawai`i QSO Party

Cumberland Amateur Radio Club (CARC) recently recapped its performance in the ARRL 2020 Field Day Operating Event. The short version is that we believe the Field Day event will be more enjoyable if we take steps to sharpen our skills.

One way of sharpening skills is to practice regularly. Almost every weekend provides an opportunity to practice those Field Day operating skills by operating in one of the on-air Radio Sport contests.

With that in mind, the purpose of this post is to share a few thoughts about the upcoming Hawaii QSO Party. CARC Club Members and other ham radio operators may enjoy spending quality time on-the-air as they develop their skills and share contest points with colleagues.

The folks who sponsor the Hawaii QSO Party publish a set of rules. Their rules document is very concise. My primary goal is to zero-in on the rules that are important to the typical CARC operator. It would be good for you to have a copy of the complete rules document available for reference. In case there are conflicts or gaps between what I say in this posting and the actual rules then it will be the actual rules that matter. Here goes….

An official set of rules can be obtained at the Hawaii QSO Party website.   www.hawaiiqsoparty.org/

Direct questions to: info@hawaiiqsoparty.org

The Hawaii QSO Party takes place the fourth Saturday of August. In 2020 this will be August 22. The contest operating period is 48 hours beginning at 0400 UTC August 22 and ending at 0359 UTC August 24.

Each participating station will have an Entry Category. Some of the Hawaii QSO Party rules are driven by the Entry Category. The CARC Members in this reading audience probably all will be categorized as SINGLE OPERATOR. If you think you may belong to a different Entry Category then please read the Hawaii QSO Party Rules and adjust your techniques accordingly. In addition, you will need to know your Entry Category at the time you submit your log.

> SINGLE OPERATOR and further subdivided as QRP, LOW POWER, HIGH POWER
> MULTI-OPERATOR, SINGLE TRANSMITTER and further subdivided as LOW POWER, HIGH POWER
> MULTI-OPERATOR, MULTI-TRANSMITTER and further subdivided as LOW POWER, HIGH POWER

Each participating station will have a Location. The CARC Members in this reading audience probably all will be located in PENNSYLVANIA.

The Hawaii QSO Party permits six ham radio bands to be used: 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, 10 Meters.

The Hawaii QSO Party permits three transmitting modes to be used: CW, PHONE, and DIGITAL.

Stations located in Hawaii are permitted to work stations in any Location – inside Hawaii, in any State or any Canadian Province, and in any Country.

Stations located outside of Hawaii may work only stations that are located inside Hawaii. The CARC Members in this reading audience probably are located in Pennsylvania and may work other stations only if the other station is located in Hawaii.

The purpose of this contest is to make two-way radio contacts with as many other participants as possible. There are specific requirements for the information that is to be exchanged between stations and logged for scoring purposes.

The contest exchange consists of the Station Call Sign, RS(T)*, and the Station Location.
>   Stations located in Hawaii will send their Callsign, RS(T)*, and their Hawaii Multiplier (Location).
>   Non-Ohio stations located in the USA and Canada will send their Callsign, RS(T)*, and State/Province
>   Non-Ohio DX stations will send their Callsign, RS(T)*, and "DX"

- Note: RS(T) means Readability, Strength which are applicable to CW and PHONE. T means Tone which is applicable only to CW. In contest situations it is traditional to give every station its RS(T) as 59, or 599. On CW abbreviate as 5NN.

Assistance – the Hawaii QSO Party Rules mention and encourage the use of spotting networks, skimmers, or other forms of assistance.

Stations located inside Hawaii are going to send the name of their Hawaii Multiplier as their Location. It will be beneficial for you to have a list of the 14 recognized Hawaii Multipliers at your fingertips during the contest. The last page of this document contains a list of Hawaii Multipliers and their three-letter abbreviation.

Stations may be worked only once per Band and Mode combination.

The Hawaii QSO Party permits contacts to be made on six bands – 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10 meters. Suggested Frequencies are listed below as well as in the Hawaii QSO Party Rules. It will be beneficial for you to have a set of Suggested Frequencies at your fingertips during the contest. Feel free to move up or down from the suggested frequencies in search for contest activity.

CW: 1.815   3.540,   7.040,   14.040,   21.040,   28.040

SSB: 1.845,   3.850,   7.230,   14.250,   21.300,   28.450

Digital: Please follow the ARRL Band Plan

Scoring Strategy – On one hand, work as many stations as you can in order to develop your contest skills. Have fun.

However, if you are feeling competitive, your score consists of QSO points, and multipliers

QSO Points – CW = 3 for each QSO, Phone = 2 for each QSO, Digital = .3 for each QSO

Worked Locations Multiplier – For the targeted reading audience most likely located in Pennsylvania, this multiplier is the total number of Hawaii Multipliers worked on each of the six permitted bands (14 x 6 = Maximum 84).

Log Submission – Electronic upload is required.
http://www.b4h.net/hqp/hqpsubmitlog.php

You are required to provide a Cabrillo format or equivalent file of your contest QSOs.
>   Your logging software should be able to produce the required Cabrillo entry document.

The entry deadline mentioned in the Hawaii QSO Party Rules still refers to September 15, 2019. Until or unless the gap has been corrected, I recommend you play it safe and use September 12, 2020 as the deadline.

Prizes – You are entering this contest as a way of improving your contest skills. If you achieve your goal then that is the Grand Prize. There are Award Certificates as described in the official rules document. Additional awards are granted to the Top Finishers in each Entry Category.

Miscellaneous Items of Interest:

There are some interesting videos posted on the Hawaii QSO Party website.

General Contest Concepts:

One of the sermons I frequently preach explains that contests work the best when all the parties are familiar with the exchange and sequential flow of information. The sender expects that the receiver has a pretty good idea of what is going to be sent and therefore will be well-prepared to log that information. The receiver expects that the sender is going to send his information in a manner consistent with the rules and general practice among similar contests.

With the exception of sprint type contests, one station in a QSO is designated as being in RUNNING MODE and the other station is designated as being in SEARCH & POUNCE MODE.

The RUNNING MODE station parks his transmitter on a clear frequency, calls CQ and hopes to receive responses from the SEARCH & POUNCE MODE stations.

The SEARCH & POUNCE MODE station tunes up and down the band listening for RUNNING MODE stations who may be calling CQ, or who may be engaged in a soon-to-be-completed QSO. When the SEARCH & POUNCE operator hears a RUNNING MODE station the S&P Station will pay attention to the rhythm of the Running Station and develop a sense of when and how quickly he needs to make his own moves when the RUNNING MODE station stops talking.

Information flows Back and Forth with the RUNNING MODE station taking his turn talking and then handing over to the SEARCH & POUNCE MODE station.

The SEARCH & POUNCE MODE station acknowledges or confirms receipt of the exchange and then immediately sends his own exchange before handing the QSO back to the RUNNING MODE station.

At that point the RUNNING MODE station will acknowledge or confirm receipt of what the SEARCH & POUNCE MODE station sent.

When both stations have sent their exchanges and each station has confirmed the other station's information the QSO should be logged.

The RUNNING MODE station stays on the frequency and calls CQ CONTEST or perhaps QRZ CONTEST.

The SEARCH & POUNCE MODE station tunes up or down the band looking for a new RUNNING MODE station to work. Or, the SEARCH & POUNCE MODE station may choose to find a clear frequency and choose to become a RUNNING MODE station.

When a SEARCH & POUNCE MODE station hears a contest QSO in progress he should listen carefully to the information that is being passed back and forth. One of the two stations is the Running Mode station. The other station is the Search & Pounce station. When this contest QSO has been completed the Running Mode station is going to stay on this frequency and hoping to work another SEARCH & POUNCE MODE station. The S&P Operator will gain an advantage if he can identify who is the Running Mode station in this QSO and be well-prepared to call that station when the QSO has finished. In other words, you don't have to find a station who literally is calling CQ CONTEST. You can listen for contest stations that have good signals, get their call sign, and jump in when it is your turn to transmit.

Hawai`i QSO Party Multipliers

In Graphical form above.

In Text form below, alphabetical by name:

Hilo	HIL
Honolulu	HON
Kalawao	KAL
Kauai	KAU
Kohala	KOH
Kona	KON
Lanai	LNI
Leeward	LHN
Maui	MAU
Molokai	MOL
Niihau	NII
Pearl Harbor Area	PRL
Volcano Park	VOL
Windward	WHN