



THE FRANKFORD RADIO CLUB NEWSLETTER

PROFICIENCY THROUGH COMPETITION

CALENDAR

November 2011:

- 5-6 Ukrainian DX Contest
- 5-6 ARRL Sweepstakes, CW
- 8 Main Meeting, 7 PM**
- 12-13 WAE DX Contest, RTTY
- 12-13 OK/OM DX Contest, CW
- 17 T.I.T.S Meeting, Noon**
- 19-20 LZ DX Contest
- 19-20 ARRL Sweepstakes, SSB
- 22 Rexy Meeting B, 8 PM**
- 26-27 CQ WW DX Contest, CW**

December 2011:

- 2-4 ARRL 160 Meter Contest
- 10-11 ARRL 10 Meter Contest
- 13 Main Meeting, 7 PM**
- 15 T.I.T.S Meeting, Noon**
- 17 OK DX RTTY Contest
- 17-18 Croatia CW Contest
- 27 Rexy Meeting B, 8 PM**
- 28 FRC Pizza Blast, Noon**

January 2012:

- 7-84 ARRL RTTY Roundup
- 10 Main Meeting, 7 PM**
- 14-15 North Am. QSO Party, CW
- 19 T.I.T.S Meeting, Noon**
- 21-22 Hungarian DX Contest
- 21-22 North Am. QSO Party, SSB
- 24 Rexy Meeting B, 8 PM**
- 28-29 CQ 160 Meter Contest, CW

CHANGES

New Member

Deadline for December issue:

Tuesday, November 29, 2011

President's Column

Straight from the Radio Shack...K9RS

Just finished an interesting CQWW SSB contest with great conditions on the radio but seems like we all had our challenges with the weather. We probably all have our stories about this one. I never ran into antenna issues with the buildup on the elements quite like this before. At **K9RS** the only antenna still working was a Hex beam but eventually that disintegrated into a mangled mess:



Then of course a little while later the power went out several times and then went out for an extended period of 5 hours. It took a while to get back all the computers etc due to the multiple quick failures before the extended one and we never did get all 4 going but limped along with two which was all we really needed to keep the run and multiplier stations going. Not sure how much this storm cost FRC but it cost us about 2 million points I think as we basically missed running almost all of Saturday during the day. I hope we get the good conditions for CW but skip the crazy weather!

It will be interesting to hear all of the stories, please consider writing up yours for inclusion in the **FRC** newsletter and placement on the web site.

FRC NEWS/MEMBER SUBMISSION

This FRC award showed up in the mail, it's always nice to get those! Let's keep them coming.



MEETINGS

Main meeting—November 8 at 7 PM, Holiday Inn, Lansdale.

FRC West meeting—The FRC West will hold a meeting at the Quentin Haus Restaurant on Wednesday, November 16 at 6:30 p.m. The Quentin Haus Restaurant is at the intersection of Route 72 and Route 419 near Lebanon, PA. It is located a few miles north of the Lebanon – Lancaster exit of the Pennsylvania Turnpike on Route 72.

T.I.T.S. meeting—The Trexlertown International Transmitting Society meets on Thursday, November 17, at 12:00 noon. Location is the Hometown Diner on Route 222 in Trexlertown..

Rexy Meeting B—The Rexy Meeting B will meet at 8 PM on Tuesday, November 22.

FRC Pizza Blast—Wednesday, December 28 at noon at the Crossroads Hotel, Hellertown, PA.

From the FRC reflector....W2UP finishes first in MorseRunner competition

Congrats Barry. First place in the MorseRunner pileup competition, 3rd in the RufzXP test, 5th in the transmitting, 6th in receiving. US team finished 10th.

<http://www.hst2011.de/results>

John, K3CT

Thanks. It was really neat hearing the Star Spangled Banner being played while I was on the podium - especially after hearing the Belarus anthem about 20 times! :) That team is simply amazing. Lots of credit to Andrei, EU7KI, who is the chief trainer of their team. BTW, I got the first gold in HST history awarded to a non-European.

Speaking of pileups, the new world record holder for Morserunner (by a wide margin) is a ~15 year old Russian girl. Interestingly, she and my younger daughter exchanged "gifts" at HST 6 years ago in Macedonia. it was a trade of a few issues of Seventeen Magazine for a Petrushka doll.

Today, we are heading to visit superstation DR1A along with some other sightseeing, then the long trip home tomorrow (3h by train to Frankfurt, then Frankfurt to Denver via Boston).

73, Barry

QSL Info

PJ4T Via KA2AEV

V26B Via KA2AEV

Both direct only Please

Reprinted from the ARRL Contest Update

October 12

Howie WA4PSC posted this extended set of instructions that describe the broadcast industry standard for weatherproofing coaxial cable connections. Adapt to your own circumstances.

When sealed correctly in the following manner the weatherproofing will last for years and withstand just about any weather. When cut open for service, the mated connected pair will be dry and shiny. This is the broadcast industry standard - others may have different methods that work well for them so the usual caveats apply. Since ham radio is a hobby, there is less financial pressure to make installations bulletproof but if the weatherproofing fails atop a tower in the dead of winter, you will rue the day you didn't do the job right.

- 1) Arrange the cable so that it can form a drip loop near the connector. Keeping water away from the connector is important. Support the cable at or near the drip loop to reduce flexing at the connector which can cause weatherproofing failure.
- 2) Thoroughly clean the connector body/cable/antenna connector body where the weatherproofing will be applied. Adhesion is greatly degraded by dust or grease.
- 3) Lay down a flat, non-wrinkled single layer of 3/4" Scotch electrical tape extending several inches out on the cable jacket and/or antenna connector and covering the mated connector bodies. This provides a clean surface for the self-fusing butyl tape layer and protects the connectors from the butyl adhesive. Some recommend flipping the initial layer upside-down over the connector to keep adhesive residue off of the connector bodies but in my experience this is a non-issue if quality tape is used, such as Scotch 33+ or 88+.
- 4) Apply a layer of self-fusing butyl tape, stopping an inch from each end of the initial layer. This is the main waterproofing layer, so it is important to keep the butyl warm and thoroughly massage it into a homogenous mass around the the connector assembly. In the winter, keep the rolls of tape and butyl inside your jacket or your arm pit until use. It is also important to press it into grooves and attempt to mold the outside surface of the butyl into as smooth a cylinder as possible. If this is not done, the top layer of tape will not lay flat and allow moisture ingress as well as allow the butyl to be exposed to the weather. Make the transition from the cylindrical mass of butyl to the cable as smooth as possible.
- 5) On top of the butyl, wrap several layers of 2" wide electrical tape extending past the bottom layer of tape on both ends of the connector assembly. Use low tension to ensure the tape is wrinkle-free and flat against the butyl and cable/antenna body. Do NOT wrap the tape tightly; when the assembly heats up in the sun the tension exerted by the tape will begin to extrude the butyl between the tape layers. The final 6" of outer tape should be applied with very little tension so as not to put shear on the unsupported adhesive. The end of the tape must be cut, not torn, so there is no distortion or residual stress in the tape. Wrap the final turns carefully, do NOT get dust, dirt, finger or other greases on the adhesive and make sure the end of the tape lands flat and with zero tension. If it pulls up for any reason, the "flag" it forms will catch the wind and eventually compromise the assembly.

I have settled on using Andrew #221213 weatherproofing kits which cost less than \$20 each, include quality Scotch tape and can weatherproof one 3" Heliac, two 1-5/8" Heliac, four 7/8" Heliac or at least six or more 1/2" UHF/N connectors with each kit (they claim 12). I have had other tower riggers say that the Wireless Solutions WK-U kit also works well. Either kit contains materials which pass MIL-STD-1344A, Method 1002 for weather resistance.

Occasionally "aneurysms" develop in the weatherproofing from trapped air bubbles caused by pressure from the inside of the cable when using UHF connectors which are not pressure tight. This pressure is caused by thermal cycling and air expansion. According to Andrews, placing gel weatherproofing compound in connectors is also not recommended as it can soften the gaskets in connector bodies, as well as be forced under expansion through the tape and contribute to degradation of the weatherproofing.

Reprinted from the ARRL Contest Update

It is common for ham antenna installs to feature multiple connectors close together where you cannot wrap tape successfully. In those cases, the dual-layer hot-melt-lined heat-shrink is often used. Getting this technique right may take some experimentation. The biggest problem with the use of adhesive-lined heat-shrink in this application is that the polymer used for the melting liner becomes quite rigid at low temperatures and may release from cable jackets when mechanically stressed by cable movement. The vinyl/butyl tape solution in general will not. In either case, adequately supporting the cable close to the connection will greatly help the longevity of the connection.

October 26

Another [Sweepstakes](#) change - this year's participants will be able to select either Low Power or High Power categories in both the Multi-Op and Unlimited categories. The "M" or "U" in the exchange will stay the same, but results (and awards) will recognize participants in each power category. Here's your chance to be on the record leader boards (until next year, anyway)!

A new web site for [WRTC 2014](#) has been created through the hard work of Rudy N2WQ. It has been completely redesigned to look more professional and contain more information that will help competitors, visitors, and others as the preparations for WRTC 2014 continue. The WRTC 2014 web team is looking for help with graphic art design and article preparation. (Thanks, WRTC 2014 co-chair, Randy K5ZD)

A new RTTY contest is coming to the bands on December 4th - check out the [10 Meter RTTY Contest](#), sponsored by Don AA5AU's [rttycontesting.com](#) and Ed WØYK's Muns Vineyard. It has the popular 24-hour format and with the bands so good lately, should attract a lot of participation on this first time out.

Geoff KA1IOR took a few public logs from last year's CQ WW contest and created some [interesting visual analysis](#) by using PERL scripts. The charts illustrate some winning techniques and will help the reader learn what strategies are important.

OPERATING TIP

Voice maintenance - to keep your voice in good shape during a long contest, learn to speak clearly at a comfortable level without shouting. It helps to practice with a friend on the air in setting your mic gain and compression levels properly. If you use voice recordings, take steps to reduce the amount of background noise in them and try to match your normal speaking voice settings for clean transmitted signals. (And watch that VFO frequency when clicking on a spot - it's easy to not notice that the frequency is outside your operating privileges or too close to a band edge.)

DXCC Desk Offers Special "Paper Application Offer" for ST0R QSLs

DXers around the world are now receiving QSL cards for the 2011 ST0R operation from the new DXCC entity of South Sudan. With next year's publishing deadline for 2011 results fast approaching on December 31, 2011, the ARRL DXCC Desk is offering a special reduced price option for those DXCC participants who have already made at least one application during 2011.

To take advantage of this offer, you must have already made a submission in the 2011 calendar year via either Logbook of The World (LoTW) or via a traditional paper application. If you have already made an application in 2011, you may then submit a paper ST0R QSL (no other cards -- just the ST0R South Sudan card) following these rules:

- Enclose \$5 (check, money order, credit card number or cash at your risk) for amateurs in the US.
- Enclose \$6 (check, money order, credit card number or cash at your risk) for amateurs who reside outside the US.
- Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for the return of the ST0R card.
- This special submission is only for the ST0R card.
- If any other card(s) are included, this will be considered a full submission subject to full fees, even if you already submitted in 2011.
- These submission conditions apply only if you have already made a submission in 2011 **and** this offer does not apply if you have not yet made your 2011 submission. All DXCC fees are in effect, as you can include this card with your regular submission.

This special offer expires on December 31, 2011 and will not be extended into 2012. If you have any questions concerning these procedures, please contact ARRL Awards Branch Manager Bill Moore, NC1L, via e-mail.

Postage Rates to Increase in January

The US Postal Service has announced that as of January 22, 2012, the cost to mail first class letters, postcards and packages within the US will go up. The cost to mail a first class letter will be 45 cents, an increase of 1 cent. According to the USPS, this is the first increase since May 2009. The additional ounce rate remains at 20 cents.

The cost of mailing a postcard will be 32 cents, an increase of 3 cents. This is the second increase for postcard postage in less than a year; in April 2011, the USPS boosted the postcard stamp price from 28 cents to 29 cents. You will also pay 85 cents to send letters to Canada and Mexico and \$1.05 for other international destinations.



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The Frankford Radio Club

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Repeater - 2 meters, 147.27/147.87 Input and Output PL tone, 114.8

Home Page - www.gofrc.org

Meetings

The main meeting is held at the Holiday Inn in Lansdale between 7-9 pm on the second Tuesday of each month from September through May. Summer meetings are held at member homes (one Saturday/Sunday per month).

Packet Cluster Contest/DX System

144.950 K3ZV
 145.050 W3TUA
 145.530 AA1K
 145.530 K3WW
 145.570 WT3Q
 145.670 W3PP

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