

Proposed Field Day 2011

The Concept

Field Day Over the Years

We have approached Field Day over the years at TARC from a variety of angles. In the old days before the merger of TARC and TBARS, Field Day was an exercise in deploying field antennas and stations powered by a small generator that labored under a heavy load while operators ate special Field Day beans prepared by Delbert, WD4HHA, that served not only to keep the operators going, but shortly after consumption served as an effective mosquito repellent.

One year, we tried to approach Field Day as if it were a true emergency situation by starting the operating period and set up at the same time, beginning operations from mobiles, then moving to mobiles with fixed antennas and ultimately, fully deployed stations on generator power.

One year we simulated a rapid deployment, holding the Field Day location secret until set up began at 2:00 pm on Friday. That's right, only one person knew where we were going to deploy and it was announced on the repeater at 2:00 pm when the set up period began.

One year we took all aspects of the exercise as a true competition, focusing on getting the most experienced operators the most air time. That year we finished second in the 2A category out of nearly 500 entries in 2A.

Last year, we brought a team of contesters together for the CW operation and set a club record of 1624 CW contacts during the 24 hour period. The SSB operation was off the air part of the 24 hour period and fell short of the number of CW contacts once again.

This year, it is being proposed that we aim for first place in 2A and expand our participation and training.

More Contacts, More Operating Time, More Fun

The plan for CW will be essentially the same as last year, however, we will need to put up an antenna for the 80 meter band. This should enhance the overnight experience, increasing the score and providing another band to go to when 40 meters dries up in the middle of the night. The operators are lined up to cover the full 24 hour period and it is reasonable to expect similar results.

As for SSB, my thought was to do the phone thing a little different this year. First, a serious run station effort under N4TP with seasoned operators at scheduled times to try and maximize the number of SSB Qs for N4TP and minimize the time that the station is off the air.

Second, a training station would be run under the W4DUG call where the more experienced ops could work with the less experienced ops to get them experience behind the mike in a less competitive environment. This training operation could "graduate" the operators to the N4TP GOTA operation for those who qualify to run GOTA and VHF for those who do not qualify for GOTA. The W4DUG training operation could operate 1D from the clubhouse from mains and our antennas to insure the best signal

possible to give meaning to the training operation. Operators could experience running frequencies, search and pounce techniques, the ins and outs of the N1MM logging program coached by more seasoned contesters. The station could run in the E class, so long as the transmitter and receiver are on generator power for all cointacts.

The GOTA operation would be the third station that we would man to get the maximum points allowed by that station; the VHF station would be the fourth station and as the VHF bands open, we could get some CW Qs there as well. We only got a couple dozen because of the station not being in operation until deep in the afternoon.

This could provide a more meaningful experience for all who want to participate. Plus we could focus the N4TP SSB effort on getting the Q count up. Plus it might actually be fun.

There are issues I am aware of regarding having all that RF floating about in a small space, but we should be able to accommodate that through additional separation from the clubhouse, yet staying within our 1000 feet circle.

It should not require us to put up any more antennas than we already put up, except 80 meter and 75 meter antennas for the overnight.

What do you think? Are you up for a run at the top of the 2A category?