# WCARES Field Day Rules 2023

### This event starts June 24th @ 1pm and runs for 24 hours

## Introduction - by Paul Tampien - KM4PT

**Field Day is ham radio's open house.** Every June, more than 40,000 hams throughout North America set up temporary transmitting stations in public places to demonstrate ham radio's science, skill and service to our communities and our nation. It combines public service, emergency preparedness, community outreach, and technical skills all in a single event. Field Day has been an annual event since 1933, and remains the most popular event in ham radio.

As in previous years, this year we will participate fully in ARRL Field Day as individuals at your home QTH and as one group in a central location, while working together for an aggregate score AND by staying in touch (virtually) throughout the weekend.

We will be operating two separate stations, CW and SSB at a single location. The address is 304 Beasley Dr, Franklin (Public Safety Center). Digital stations (FT-8 / PSK-31 or ANY Digital Mode) will be at your home QTH or other designated location. The reason for this separation is to minimize interference on the bands

My hope is you'll choose to participate in this WCARES event and will use the guidelines in this document to make the most of our virtual weekend together. That said, there's no shame (or judgment) if you choose to go a different route. Still with me? Let's go!

Giving credit where credit is due, there are two sources for this interesting concept of how we're planning to carry out this event:

- 1. The ARRL announced <u>new rules for the 2023 Field Day</u>. One of those specified that the ARRL will publish the aggregate score of a club, based on the log files of its individual members. By specifying "**WCARES-TN**" in the club name field when submitting our individual logs, our scores will combine for a club score. In this way, we're all working together.
  - a. Power output for classes A, B and C cannot exceed 500 watts Peak Envelope Power (PEP) transmitter output. Power output for classes D, E and F cannot exceed 100 watts Peak Envelope Power (PEP) transmitter output.
  - b. If all contacts are made using a power of 5 watts or less *and* if a power source other than commercial mains or motor-driven generator is used (batteries, solar cells, water-driven generator), the power multiplier is five (5)
- 2. In 2021, Scott Davis, the author of <u>N3FJP contest logging software</u>, sent an email to his users wherein he discussed how his local club stays in touch during contests. I've included that email at the end of

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this document for your reference. In short, they use the Discord app to chat with each other AND they share their real-time scoring on the internet. We're going to do both of these things.

# The Big Picture

There are several things that are unique to our 2023 Field Day experience and I've included them here...

1. SSB and CW stations will be combined at the Public Safety Center (EOC), all using the WCARES callsign (N4FR). All time slots for operators of these stations are broken down into 3 hour increments. You are more than welcome to operate multiple time slots.

You may also operate from your home QTH using your own callsign. (ANY MODE)

- 2. Visitors/observers are welcome but note that the very limited space will make observation problematic for more than one or two at a time. Think of this as just an outlet for those who'd like to stop by for an "eyeball QSO" with whomever is present.
- 3. Playing as Individuals but working toward a common goal. The ARRL announced that people submitting Field Day logs as individuals could also specify a club name and all of the logs that bear the same club name will be aggregated for a total club score. This change of the Field Day rules will allow us to compete as individuals but adds the fun of working together for the good of the group score.

Seeing each other's progress and our combined score... - Having our computers networked together during previous WCARES Field Days, we took advantage of the N3FJP logging software's ability to show our combined score in real-time. While we won't be networked together this year, the N3FJP logging software has another trick up its sleeve that WILL allow us to see each other's progress and our combined score! This is pretty cool. Here's how it works...

When configuring the N3FJP logging software, there is a "Settings Menu" choice called *Web Upload Contest Status*. (Detailed configuration instructions are found later in this document.) You can configure N3FJP to upload your contact statistics to the internet every few minutes. Using HamDash, it looks at all of the cloud files and builds a custom web page showing our total club score AND the statistics of each participating station! By simply keeping a web browser open all weekend to that special web page, we'll all be able to see each other's progress and keep track of our combined score.

Live chat all weekend. - Another way to hang out together is through a live chat room where we can type messages to each other, post photos, etc.

A WCARES "server" with the <u>Discord</u> online service has been set up. By creating your free account on <u>Discord.com</u>, you can then click a special link that will grant you access to our "server"/chat area. I'll include that special link later in this document.

## To-Do's: Before, During, and After

### Prior to Field Day

- Purchase/Configure/Test N3FJP Logging Software
- Configure CAT interface for automatic band/mode logging
- Configure CW interface if using CW with keyboard macros
- If using N3FJP, configure Web Upload Contest Status
- Create a Discord account
- Click the special link to gain access to HamDash
- Explore WCARES Chat Room
- Read the Field Day rules
- Determine your "Class" for the event
- Check your antenna(s)
- Get your station ready (including power source)
- Brush up on your Field day operating techniques per mode
- Read Carl Sibilski's propagation information in this presentation he made for WCARES in 2018: https://wcares.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/2018 FIELD DAY PRESENTATION.pdf

## **During Field Day Weekend**

- Check/update your computer's clock for the correct date/time
- Confirm your logging software is working correctly
- If at home, use your own call sign (the Field Day location operators will be using N4FR)
- Chat with other WCARES members online using the Discord chat room app
- Check the progress of others online at: HamDash

## To-Do: After Field Day

- Export your log using the Web Applet in a "Dupe Sheet" format
- Use ARRL web app to submit your entry (and upload your log)

## Sign-up for Operator at EOC (use the link below)

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Ti67f0Y1P9awctqq WEn55fl10wHdsCfpI-Uklvfr2MA/edit?usp=sharinq

# All the Regular Field Day Stuff...

Providing detailed information and advice about working Field Day efficiently and effectively is beyond the scope of this document. You'll find many articles and videos on the topic of contesting best practices. Google is your friend. We'll address some of these things in the WCARES Monthly Meeting prior to Field Day.

It's up to you how seriously you want to take this event. You can operate casually and make a few contacts or you can go nuts and try to earn the maximum points possible.

### Everybody should read the official ARRL rules.

Read them online in a web browser here: <a href="http://www.arrl.org/field-day-rules">http://www.arrl.org/field-day-rules</a>

Read them in a PDF, suitable for printing here: <a href="https://contests.arrl.org/ContestRules/Field-Day-Rules.pdf">https://contests.arrl.org/ContestRules/Field-Day-Rules.pdf</a>

If you want to maximize the points you earn in the contest, you will need to read the official rules and take note of the bonus points and "power multipliers" that are the key to boosting your score. See "Section 7. Scoring" for the details.

In a nutshell, you'll score the most points if you do the following:

- Run 5 watts (QRP) on battery power during the entire event
- Make as many contacts as you can. This will require you to work multiple bands and/or modes.

Even though you will score the most points that way, you naturally won't make as many contacts at 5 watts as you will at 100 watts.

For questions regarding WCARES Field Day 2023, contact Paul Tampien - KM4PT@arrl.net

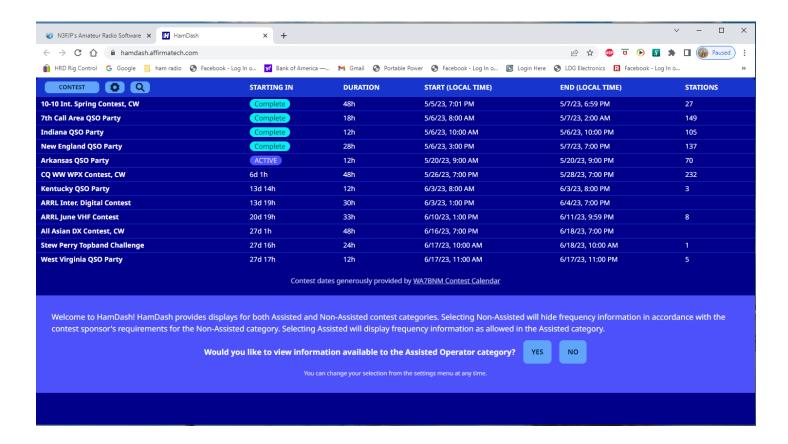
## View Live Scores During Field Day

Everyone using the standard N3FJP software to log their Field Day contacts can contribute to the group score in real-time. Do this by configuring N3FJP to upload your contacts on a periodic basis. (The next section of this document shows you how to configure the software for this purpose.)

During Field Day weekend, view individual scores and our group score by going to this web page:

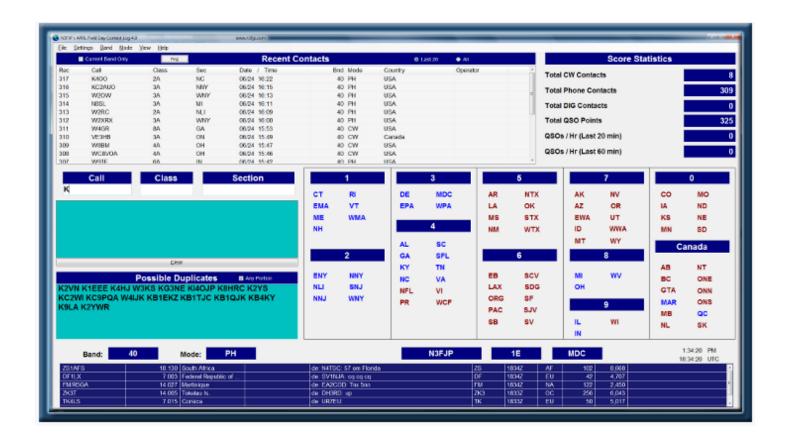
https://hamdash.affirmatech.com/

When you go to that site on Field Day, you'll see a web page like this:



# Setting up HamDash

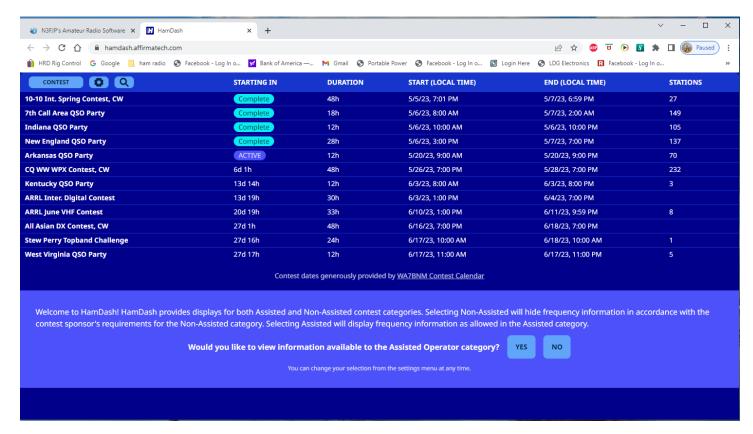
In order to sign-up with HamDash, go to N3FJP Field Day Contest Log.



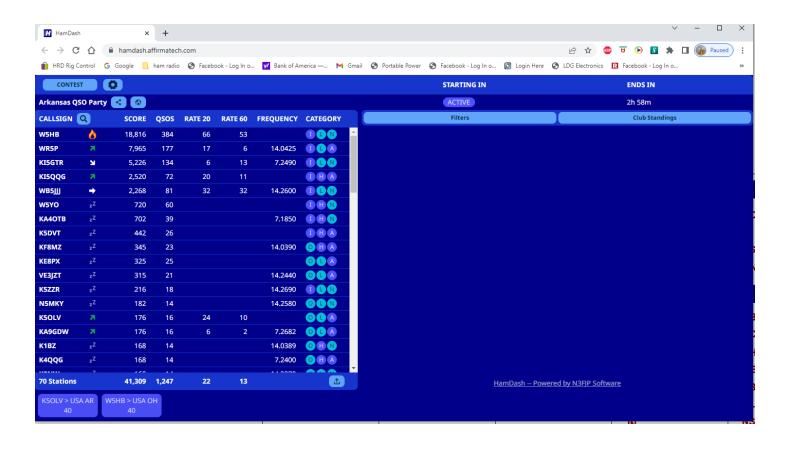
At the bottom right of the page is "NEW! HamDash (N3FJP Scoreboard and Other Online Sites" - click on it and that will bring you to -

Web Contest Status Uploader - Other Real Time Online Scoreboard Sites		
Watching everyone's score in real time is a blast! Whether you have serious competition in mind or just playing casually, please join in. It's free! To automatically upload to HamDash (https://hamdash.affirmatech.com/), just check the Enabled check box for HamDash (N3FJP Scoreboard) on the left. To also upload to Contest Online Score and CQ Contest, check the Score Distributor option, too. That's all there is to it!  Brand new in 2023, HamDash (N3FJP Scoreboard) can be easily set to provide a real time display for all participants, your category or just your local club. HamDash doesn't require any user supplied web space or infrastructure and is much easier to set up than our legacy N3FJP Club Score processor. Simply click Enabled to join in with the rest of your club members who are participating!		
HamDash (N3FJP Scoreboard)  ☐ Enabled Test Visit HamDash provides a real time display for you individually, your local club, region or all who are participating, similar to N3FJP's Club Score processor, but better! Even if you are a casul contester, please try it!  ☐ Visit HamDash Now!		
Score Distributor for Both COL & CQC Please enable this option, even if you are a casual contester!	Other 1 Only use for sites not supported by Score Distributor. User Name KM4PT	Other 2 Only use for sites not supported by Score Distributor. User Name KM4PT
URL http://www.b41h.net/scoredistribu	Password Display URL	Password Display URL
☐ Enabled Test	☐ Enabled Test	☐ Enabled Test
Contest Upload Parameters		
Contest Callsign ARRL-FD   Callsign KM4PT	Operator Station SINGLE-OP FIXED	Transmitter Power LOW Sec
Assisted   Band   Mode   Category Overlay   Club Name   NON-ASSISTED   DIG   N/A   WCARES-TN		
Done		

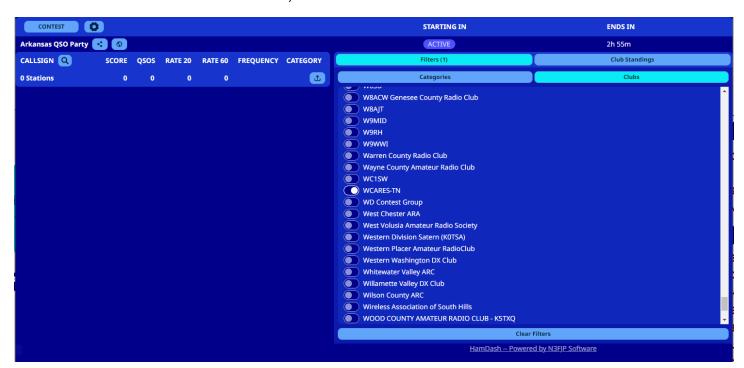
Fill in the appropriate information, Callsign and other parameters, make sure that HamDash is enabled and click the "Test" button and then the "Visit" button and it will take you to -



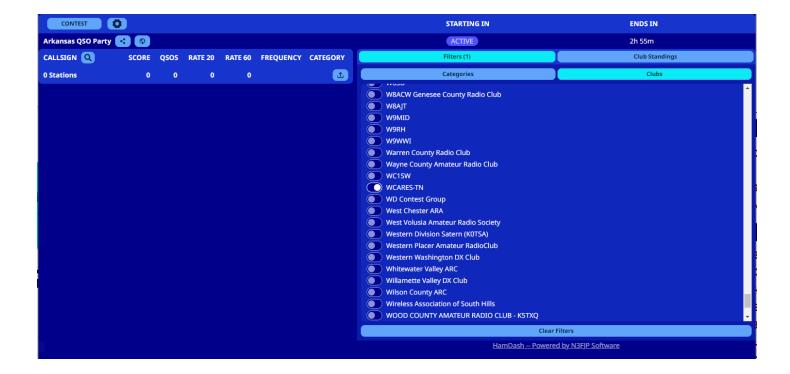
On your screen (it doesn't appear above because of when this screenshot was taken), and during or slightly before Field Day, there will be a selection on the left hand list of "ARRL Field Day Contest." Select that, and that will bring you to -



### Click on "FILTERS" and "CLUBS", look for "WCARES-TN"



Once you have clicked on "WCARES-TN" you will be able to see our scores



After this, you are done inputting parameters, back out to the "HamDash (N3FJP Scoreboard) and hit "Done" at the bottom and that takes you back to the "Web Contest Status Uploader", hit "Done" and you are ready to GO.

# Watering Hole Frequencies?

Andrew Gossett had a great suggestion (given to me using our Field Day chat room)...

It could be very useful to have a suggested "watering hole" band plan for WCARES members looking to contact other WCARES members. It would be fun to try to work as many WCARES members as possible.

Rather than publishing a schedule here, let's coordinate it in our online chat room during Field Day.

Check the field-day chat room (see the Discord.com account set up instructions later in this document) at the following times to learn which bands are available to contact other WCARES members...

Saturday: 4:00pm, 7:00pm, 10:00pm

Sunday: 9:00am, Noon

# Logging Your Field Day Contacts

If you're reading this, I'm going to assume you're planning to log your contacts and submit them to the ARRL after the event. It will help WCARES achieve a higher score if you'll specify "**WCARES-TN**" in the Club Name field when submitting your log. By doing this, our individual scores will combine for the WCARES "club" score. But, hang on, I'm getting ahead of myself...

When you upload your log file to the ARRL, you'll fill out a form on their website and then upload your log in the Cabrillo file format or as a Dupe Sheet. Every ham radio contact logging software package includes the ability to export Cabrillo files. While it's true that you can still submit paper logs, word on the street is that a kitten dies every time someone submits a paper log in this day and age. Let your conscience be your guide.

I strongly suggest you use the ARRL Field Day Contest Log software by N3FJP. This is the software we've used to log our Field Day contact for years. It's easy to use, it's tailored to Field Day, and it's available for only \$8.99 on Scott Davis' website: <a href="http://www.n3fip.com/fieldday.html">http://www.n3fip.com/fieldday.html</a>

Those of you who have previously purchased the N3FJP Field Day software will want to **update to the latest version (ver. 6.6.7). It's a free update** that includes the new Canadian sections and the ability for Class D stations to work other D stations (thanks to the temporary waiver granted for 2021).

Launching the N3FJP software will, by default, present you with a setup form where you'll enter your call sign and other information for your station. (Remember you use your own call sign - NOT N4FR!)

While logging your contacts during Field Day, it's very convenient if your radio is connected to your computer via a USB cable or serial port. If the computer can "talk" to the radio, the software can automatically log the Band, Mode, and Frequency for each contact. You may have heard of this called "CAT (computer-aided transceiver) Control". Under the Settings menu in the N3FJP software, there is a "Rig Interface..." menu choice that you'll use to configure your radio. I know from experience that without this computer/radio connection it's easy to forget to change bands in the software when you change bands on the radio. You might have made several QSO's before you realize that your log is wrong and have a hard time remembering when you switched bands! CHECKOUT the entire N3FJP website for Hints and Hacks

The WCARES CW folks are familiar with configuring N3FJP for transmitting morse code using keyboard macros so I won't go into it here. If anyone wants to try it for the first time, I'd be happy to help you set up N3FJP the way that Tim Kreth (AD4CJ) has taught us all to set it up for the last few years.

SSB people might want to "get fancy" and record audio files a) calling CQ and b) giving the contest exchange. If your radio doesn't provide the native capability of transmitting audio files, you might consider configuring N3FJP to do so. This can really save your voice during a long contest. Under the Settings menu, the menu choice "Transmit->Phone Setup..." is used to configure this.

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### As you log each contact, there are only three fields to enter:

**Call** - the call sign of the station you are communicating with.

**Class** - A number + letter combination that indicates the number of transmitters and working conditions of the other station. See "Section 4. Entry Categories" here in the official rules for more information... <a href="http://www.arrl.org/field-day-rules">http://www.arrl.org/field-day-rules</a>

**Section** - A two or three letter designator for the geographic area of the other station. A printable version of the official section list can be found here:

http://www.arrl.org/files/file/Field-Day/2023/4 35-2023%20Section%20List.pdf

**Note:** don't forget that the Band and Mode are required to be set correctly for each contact. Interestingly, the actual frequency of the contact isn't required but the Band and Mode are. Setting up CAT Control is highly recommended so you don't have to worry about changing these things when you change bands or modes during the contest let the computer poll the radio for the information as each contact is logged.

WCARES members are allowed to work each other during Field Day. However, something that we need to stress is, since we're running as N4FR this year, if you have a shift at N4FR, you <a href="Cannot">Cannot</a> contact N4FR from your home.

## After The Contest - Submitting Your Log

Congrats! The twenty-four-hour event has come to an end and you've got some contacts to contribute to the group score. Awesome.

The ARRL wants you to use their web app form to submit your entry at: <a href="https://field-day.arrl.org/fdentry.php">https://field-day.arrl.org/fdentry.php</a>

When you go there in your browser, you're going to be asked to fill out a form AND to submit your contacts.

You can give them your contacts in the form of a "Dupe Sheet" (which is simply a text file of your contacts categorized by band/mode with the call signs sorted alphabetically) OR a Cabrillo formatted log. N3FJP can create Cabrillo files. And, on that same screen where Cabrillo files are created, there is a button labeled "Write Dupe File" that will create a Dupe Sheet for you.

To submit your Field Day entry to the ARRL, do this:

- 1. Delete any contacts from your log that you know need to be deleted. (This could include any early contacts you created while testing.)
- 2. In the N3FJP software, click the File menu and choose "Dupe Sheet (Contest Submittal) File..."
- 3. **In the pop-up form that appears, you can ignore all of those data entry fields!** (You're going to fill out those fields online on the ARRL website.)
- 4. At the bottom of the screen, click the button labeled "Write Dupe File" and you'll be prompted to save the Dupe Sheet file to your computer. (This is a text file that you can open with Notepad or any text editor.)
- 5. You may also want to click the button labeled "Write / View Summary File" as this file contains a breakdown of the number of contacts per band/mode that you'll need when filling out the ARRL web form. (You can derive this information from the Dupe Sheet but it's broken down into a more easily viewable table in the Summary file.)

Okay, you've got your Dupe Sheet (or Cabrillo formatting log file) and you may also have your Summary file. It's time to go to the ARRL Field Day data entry form to submit your entry.

https://field-day.arrl.org/fdentry.php

The one important thing to remember when you submit your entry is to enter "WCARES-TN" in the field labeled Club or Group Name.

### Live Chat

During Field Day weekend, we can hang out with each other in an online chat room. To facilitate this, we've chosen to use the Discord.com platform.

- 1. Create your free account at <a href="Discord.com">Discord.com</a>
- 2. Afterward, click on this link: <a href="https://discord.gg/vzTJYNU">https://discord.gg/vzTJYNU</a>

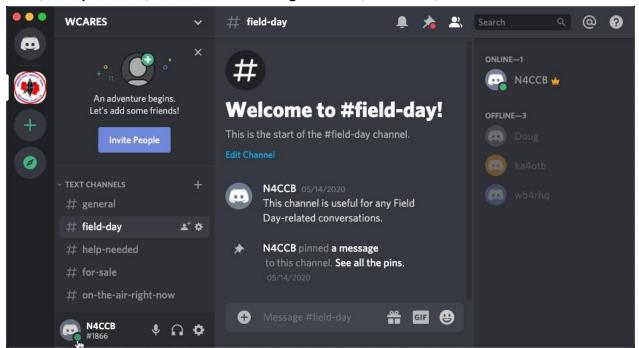
This is an "invitation link" and will grant access to the WCARES "server" forever. (You'll click this link once.)

The WCARES server currently contains the following "Text Channels" (chat rooms)

- general
- field-day
- help-needed
- for-sale
- on-the-air-right-now

These channels are used for live free-form text messages that are meant to be read in real-time.

Use the *field-day* text channel to post messages and/or photos during Field Day. Encourage each other, ask questions, celebrate interesting contacts, talk trash, etc.



## From Scott Davis, author of N3FJP software...

#### (This is where the idea to use Chat and web-based stats came from - Cliff)

#### How can our group enjoy Field Day together virtually, while staying apart?

Our NEMARC club hangs out together virtually for every major ARRL and CQ contest, so I have a lot of firsthand experience to share with this question! Since we won't be able to physically be together this time for Field Day, operating together virtually is our plan for Field Day 2020 as well.

Some folks enjoy contesting as a lone wolf, spending the weekend in solitary pursuit, but running with the pack and contesting together as a team has more than doubled the enjoyment for many in our club. We all operate from our individual homes and we each submit our own scores, but we thoroughly enjoy each other's company, as well as the fun of seeing our current club total and individual scores in real time on our leader board virtually. Very briefly, here's how:

- We have a text chat group that we set up on the free Discord app, which has evolved beyond contesting. It is our virtual clubhouse. Guys sign in almost every day to chat, alert members to DX, seek help and offer advice. This works beautifully during contests too, as there is lots of fun, encouragement, newer guys can ask questions and others can answer when convenient. Of course we have good natured banter and camaraderie, just as if we were physically together. The virtual clubhouse has become the backbone of our club in many additional ways that would take too long to explain now, but you can get a little more sense of how we use it from this video here:

#### http://www.nemarc.org/clubhouse.htmli

- We use my free Club Score Processor, so we all can see how we are doing as a club, as well as individually, in real time. The real time leader board display that the processor creates is an automatically refreshing web page. You can be sure all club members keep the leader board and virtual clubhouse displayed on their desktops all weekend. Of course, there is friendly competition within the group, but the key, especially for new folks, is that they understand there is zero pressure and that more importantly, we are a TEAM, working together. Every QSO helps the group, so jump in and have fun!

With ARRL's 1,000 foot Field Day rule, I don't think ARRL will be combining individual scores to create a club total, but there's no reason you can't see how your club fares against other clubs in your region directly. Comparisons to other clubs aside, it is great fun to see how everyone in your club is doing throughout the weekend, evaluating results with similar setups, seeing if someone needs help, etc.

You'll find my free Club Score Processor here: <a href="http://www.n3fip.com/clubscore.html">http://www.n3fip.com/clubscore.html</a>

I have lots more information on how you can operate together virtually in this article that I wrote for ARRL (published in August 2016 QST) here: <a href="http://www.n3fjp.com/help/clubcontesting.html">http://www.n3fjp.com/help/clubcontesting.html</a>

I am very grateful for this question. These methods have thoroughly revitalized our local club over the last few years. Our membership is growing and we are more active and vibrant than ever. I know they will bring positive energy and lots of fun to your group as well!

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