

Results of the 2012 CQ WW WPX SSB Contest

BY RANDY THOMPSON,* K5ZD

Expanded Results on the Web

As usual, QRM and operator lists accompany this article on the WPX Contest page of the CQ website <www.cq-amateur-radio.com>. In addition, this year the top scores for the U.S. and Europe are also on the web in order that we can once again provide you with a full "top-ten" list of world high scores in each category. —W2VU

After a few weeks of disappointing conditions, expectations were hopeful for the 54th running of the CQ WPX SSB Contest in March 2012. Entrants watched the solar forecasts, plotted their strategies, and tried to anticipate which category would produce the most fun, highest score, or a new all-time record.

At the starting gun, the rates were excellent. Many stations reported more than 400 QSOs in the opening hours. Fifteen meters was best from the western USA, while 20 and 40 were the hot bands back east and in Europe. Something happened to the sun on Saturday, though, and the spell was broken. Conditions dropped to only fair, and squeezing most of the activity into 40, 20, and 15 meters made for a rough-and-tumble experience.

QRM was a popular topic in the chatter after the contest. Scott, K7ZO, said, "I am not sure I have ever heard 15 as packed as I heard it this weekend. It sounded like 20 at the bottom of the solar cycle." From Matija, S53MM, "QRM was killing me almost all of the time." Ed, K6CTA, enjoyed his experience: "Heavy rain on Saturday kept me inside, and what better way to spend the day than on the radio fighting QRM on SSB!"

Those who stuck it out saw conditions improve on Sunday. More than one entrant commented on having their best rates at the end of the contest! You just never know how a contest will play out, so it is important to stay in the chair all the way to the end, or maybe, like Dave, K6LL, you just can't resist: "I didn't plan to put in much time in this contest, but I had fun on Friday night and kept coming back to the radio like a moth to the flame."

In the end, much of the enjoyment of contesting is about the experience. Bill, K2PO, described it this way: "It's always fun to have an exotic station come back to a CQ when you're working US stations. 5X1D was the highlight in that category this time." Roberto, CE4CT, had some memorable moments, too: "...In the middle of the contest there were two earthquakes, 5.9 and 7.2, but in neither stop transmitting for no lose the rate."

"WPX is like a worldwide costume ball. You never know who may be behind the mask!"—Jim, AD1C

The WPX Contest counts prefixes as multipliers. This encourages activation of interesting special call signs and some stations "borrowing" call signs that have a less common prefix. The result is more fun, but never knowing to whom the voice behind the microphone belongs. Many Croatian stations added "20" to their prefix to celebrate the 20-year anniversary of the 9A prefix. LY22A was in honor of the 22nd anniversary of independence of Lithuania. The team at EI7M used EI100T to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the last (and first!) sailing of the S.S. *Titanic*. IY4FGM was the Marconi Memorial Station operating from the villa where young Guglielmo Marconi made his first experiments in wireless communications.

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Solar Indices During WPX SSB Contest 2009–2012

Year	Solar Flux Index	A Index	K Index
2012	103	10	2
2011	114	1	0
2010	88	7	2
2009	71	3	1



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Steve, GW4BLE, operated single band 75 meters. You can listen to your QSO with him at <www.gw4ble.dxlixt.co.uk>.

The top prefix count among all entries was once again achieved by the big German multi-multi station DR1A, with 1841. This is 68 fewer prefixes than their record set one year ago. The best prefix total by a single-operator was CN2R with 1424. Special thanks to those stations who provided some of the more interesting prefix multipliers, including: 4G0LD, 5P12EU, 8J10SAI, 9A22P, HU0A, L59D, L60S, LZ12FDAY, LZ1784SIB, LZ40YE, SZ6P, TM22P, TM38O, TO7BC, UE85DRK, V55V, VP52V, YB8Y, and YE3J. Harley, K8BI, commented, "Some of these calls were so weird I had no idea what I was working and where to point the beam!"

Single-Operator All Band

The race for top Single-Operator All Band score was once again between perennial champions Jim, W7EJ, at CN2R, and Tom, W2SC, at 8P5A. Jim used his proximity to Europe to gain double QSO points on the low bands and set a new all-time record. Tom made 800 more contacts, mostly on 20 and 40, but it just wasn't enough. Andy, AE6Y, was close behind from P49Y. After wrestling with pulling QSO numbers out of the QRM all weekend, Andy suggested a new way of saying numbers: "...we should all use: zero, uno, due, tres, quattro, cinco, six, siete, otto or ocho, nova or nueve ... doing so would lessen necessary repeats and up the scores considerably." Should contesters create their own set of phonetic numbers?

Who says the guys in New England win everything? There was a battle of superstations with super ops for the top USA score. Kevin,

