

K3KU's Prime Rule for Contesting

1. Have fun. Understand yourself; know what motivates you and what you expect to get out of operating the contest. Do what gives you the most satisfaction. (Try not to harm others. But if you do harms others, they will soon drive you out.)

"All the rest is commentary. Go and learn"

General Approach (not well ordered):

2. For real tyros, listen to some of the big guns running people -- not to learn how the big guns operate, but to learn how to be a good pouncer. Learn how to keep the rhythm going, how not to waste words and time. Practice (w/o actually transmitting) calling the runner and saying your report -- like the on-deck batter swinging at the pitch.

3. Know your abilities. Don't try to stretch them too far too fast. Don't try to work a CQer who is running faster than you can copy. Don't try to run before you can copy a weak callers' reports efficiently through QRM.

4. Know your station's capabilities. Don't try to run in Kilowatt Alley if you don't have a big signal. Don't waste time and add to the QRM in an unruly pileup if you have no chance of getting through. (Don't rely on miracles.) Know when your station can have openings to the target areas

5. Know how to operate your station -- antenna switching, logging software, ...

6. If your objective is to maximize your score, know the rules so you can figure out whether to run or to S&P, which band to use (high volume, or missing multipliers), whether to stay in the chair or take a break.

SS-specific, for 100W and a dipole:

7. "Fresh meat" effect is powerful in SS. If you are inactive until late in the contest, you will have lot's of response to CQs, and you will have little competition when answering CQs.

8. Call any CQer you can copy. You can listen to a CQer run a QSO or two to copy his info before you call. The big guns will be the most efficient responders. They hear better, they send their report smoothly, and they will stay calm when asking you for any repeats they need.

9. If you have trouble copying CQers in the mid-band QRM, look at the edges of the band.

10. You can, in fact, have some success CQing (see especially #6). Stay out of the mid-band QRM; look for open spots (fat chance!) high and low in the band. If you find an open spot, quickly ask "is this freq in use" or dump in your call once or twice, or send a quick "TEST K3KU" once or twice. If that doesn't generate a "K3KU QRL QSY!!!" then you can start regular CQs.

And a million things more.

73 and CU SS. Remember Rule 1.

Art K3KU
Tune for MaximumFun