

THE 5-WATTER

THE NEWSLETTER FOR QRP NZ.

HOW TO BOOST YOUR GQN SCORE -STAN ZL3TK

As alluded to by Rob in the January issue of 'The 5-Watter', this author is expecting some stiff competition in the quest for a leading place in the 2024 GQN. In 2023 apart from CW contacts which are somewhat akin to hens' teeth, all my operation was home station, meaning that the contest's potential for earning points was not being exploited. Instead of going portable to good effect as in previous years, I hid in the warm confines of the shack using old age and senility as my time-worn excuse.

To quickly see the possibilities open to you by expanding your horizons, load one of your Excel log sheets and enter a 'Y', one at a time, into the appropriate cells. You'll see a dynamic demonstration in the results column of what happens to your score. This simple exercise shines a light on what is possible by going the 'extra mile' by upgrading from home station, to portable, then proceeding another 2 km on foot to put yourself into back country status, and even add CW to your wardrobe of fine contest strategies. Although it's entirely ho-hum predictable, let me illustrate the benefits in table-form anyway:

How Personal Effort Boosts your Base Score			
Mode	Location	Bonus Points / QSO	QSO Total
SSB	Home station	0	3
	Portable	+ 1	4
	Back Country	+ 3	6
CW	Home station	+ 2	5
	Portable	+ 3	6
	Back Country	+ 5	8

Can't really sniff at those figures, can you?

Well, here's another trick which I'll share as bait for hooking more competition this year.

With a half-hour of GQN still to run, it might seem like everyone's gone to bed, but that's rarely the case. Keep on calling CQ right until the last available minute because, even if your gravest fear materialises and there really are no more GQN stations to work, non-QRP stations often reply out of curiosity. It then becomes your task to ask the newcomer if he can reduce his power to < 10 W, often easily accomplished thanks to modern rigs, in order that you qualify for the points.

Now, having hooked your fish, and in your role as ambassador for GQN, tell him about the informational webpage <https://bit.ly/zlgqn> and invite him to participate in the next, and subsequent month's QRP events. 'The more, the merrier', as the actress said to the bench of Bishops.

Let's see you all climbing that leader-board ladder.

AUTHOR, CONTACTING

Unless stated otherwise, all articles were written by the editor Rob ZL2 RMC. You can contact Rob at qrpnz12021@gmail.com.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

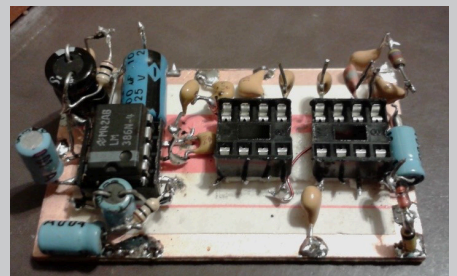


IMAGE COURTESY - ERIC ZL2BMI

**QRP NET THURSDAYS 3.690MHZ
8.30PM**

MARCH 2 2024. 8.30PM GO QRP NIGHT

MARCH 30 2024. 8.30PM GO QRP NIGHT

**MAY 19 & 20. NZART SANGSTER
SHIELD**

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GQN LOGS**

FISTS DOWN UNDER BANDSLOT CONTEST – PHILIP ZLIPSH

The CW organisation FISTS Down Under (FDU) ran a QRP band-slot contest in 2023. A band slot was the combination of a DXCC entity and a band. Some examples of band slots are Spratly Is-40m, Spratly Is-20m, and Conway Reef-20m. The permitted bands were 80m, 40, 20m, 15m and 10m. Each contestant was restricted to 5W for all of their QSOs; the remote station in each and every QSO could use any power up to the legal limit.

The contest ran throughout the year and was won by Graeme VK5GG. Pete VK1AAF was second. Graeme was based in South Australia and had 45 band slots - five on 40m, 22 on 20m, 12 on 15m and six on 10m. Graeme's QSOs included a QSO with a PNG station for which Graeme used 700 mW.

Pete was based in Canberra and had 22 band slots - two on 80m, nine on 40m, eight on 15m and three on 10m. Pete's QSOs included two with a station in Eastern Kiribati and one with a station in the Marquesas Islands.

FDU is running the QRP band-slot contest again this year. The contest rules for 2024 differ from those used in 2023. The main difference is that 160m and 6m have been added to the permitted bands. If you would like to participate in the 2024 contest but you are not a member of FDU, please email the author of this article.

FDU is also running a band-slot contest in 2024 where any power up to the legal limit can be used. Philip Sharp ZLIPSH can be contacted by email: zululima1psh@gmail.com

A MEASUREMENT OF EFFICIENCY – REUBEN ZLIAJC

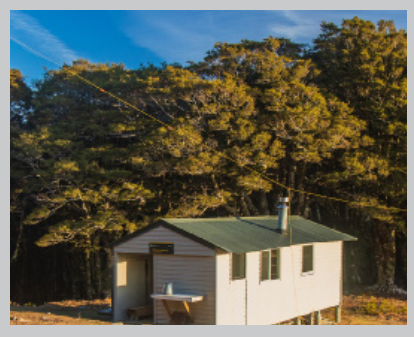
A popular unit of measurement among the QRP community is "Kilometres per Watt". Something many of us will already be familiar with, Km/W is calculated by simply dividing distance a signal has traveled by the power of the transmission itself. A simple yet effective and highly relevant method of measuring low power radio activities, Km/W delivers a single number, of which a higher result is the more desirable. For example a 500mW Auckland based station with a confirmed contact in Whangarei would achieve 1,758km/W, despite the physical distance itself being far less than that. In a much more relatable example to readers here, a station transmitting from Auckland to Nelson running 5W would achieve only 101km/W.

While being a convenient way to determine the efficiency of a radiated signal, this method is not without its flaws. The first being no allowance of the conditions of the chosen band at the time, not to mention the selection of band itself. Another glaringly obvious issue is the mode of transmission. In 2005, The North American QRP CW club made a transmission of 878km using a transmitter of only 40 micro-watts (0.000046 watts) creating a staggering 19.1 million Km/W. Compare that with a 4w SSB contact from Nelson to Madrid which would comparatively deliver a measurement of 4,939Km/W.

Having a verbal conversation with the other side of the planet using less power than a nightlight would be a memorable occasion to say the least for any radio operator, yet the numbers are totally obliterated when stacked up against a mode requiring far less bandwidth.

However when comparing Apples with Apples so to speak, the method becomes a whole lot more accurate. SSB contacts - although requiring a far wider slice of the spectrum to operate - are arguably the most popular and easiest to relate to among most amateur operators.

A quick scan back through your own logbook with a calculator will be an easy way to determine your own personal best. One of the reasons I keep coming back to low power radio is to get my own number even higher. The thought of my own faint radio waves flying out through the night, over rooftops and mountain ranges, to be received and heard by someone I never knew existed brings a thrill everytime. My SSB experience with Madrid may have been a one off event I will struggle to repeat for a long time, but not for lack of trying, that's for sure.



For those that wish to contact me or submit content I'll be keen to hear from you.
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THE EDITORS DESK

Hi to all NZ QRP members, firstly a thanks to the volunteers who have put their hands up to help with content. This particular issue certainly has some great extra content to inspire us to get on the air competing with our QRP rigs.

For those who frequent the NZART webpage you will note that our QRP section has been updated to reflect the latest in regard to our go qrp night activity. The webpage Stan maintains for us is also the most up to date reference for our current activities and source of information for all things Go QRP Night. For those wanting to brush up on any rules, or have others to refer who may be keen to join, Stans webpage link below is a great first stop.

<https://qsl.net/zl3tk/gqn/gqn.htm>

The first Go QRP Night for the year was certainly a busy one, a great effort from all the stations getting on the air.

As advised previously Stan ZL3TK has offered to take over checking logs and updating the points for this years competition. No one seemed to have a problem with Stan doing this and most were in favour.

Stan is certainly very accurate and methodical with things.

The logs will be available on the webpage also to ensure fairness.

Please email completed logs after GQN to Stan: zl3tk.radio@gmail.com

I hope everyone has had a good month and may have supported their local branch on Jock White Field Day.

Regards

73's

Rob ZL2RMC

NEXT GO QRP NIGHT
SATURDAY 2 MARCH 8.30PM - 10.00PM NZT