CWA Advanced Class Notes

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Session 0

- Meet and Greet

- Introduce ourselves

- Test Jitsi and Sidetone audio

    – No time limit on Jitsi "free" account

    – No special audio settings

    – Jitsi seems to prioritize audio over video when allocating bandwidth

- Do the first three h/w assignments before the first class on Monday

Overview

- 8-weeks (Monday & Thursday evenings in North America, 6-7PM on the West Coast (0200-0300 UTC Tu & Fri)

    - MST follows immediately after on Mondays

    - We would like to have an on-air rag-chew session each week as well

    - **Please use headphones!!!**

- Daily Practice

    - Two or three 15-minute sessions per day is much more effective than one 4-hour block once per week

    - Homework: Short stories, QSOs and CWT exchanges

        - Practice sending also!

    - Software: **RufzXP** and **MorseRunner**

        - There is a "community edition" of Morse Runner that includes several different contest formats

        - DO NOT use any special lists of call signs!

    - Evaluate your sending (e.g. Iambic Master, recording ...)

    - **GET ON THE AIR!!!**

        - SST, MST and CWT are great contest practice

        - Ragchews

        - In-class exercises will reinforce skills but are no substitute for practice and OTA time

- We will supplement each class with related topics to help improve your operating skills and overall enjoyment of our great hobby

Course Topics

- Sending

- Practice Mini-tests: SST, MST CWT

- Hit-and-Run and Short QSOs

- Rag-chewing

- Logging

- Chasing DX

- Cut Numbers

- Sending

- DX Cluster and RBN

- More Contesting

- CW Ops

- ???

Philosophy

- Its a hobby, not a competition or a vocation!

  - Keep it fun!!!

- Just like on the air (OTA), there are different skill levels coming into this class

  - Compare yourself **only to yourself**, not your classmates

  - Don't get frustrated or worry about slowing down your classmates

    - All of us, even the CW "speed demons," have been where you are now

  - More skilled ops, PSE QRS! GET THE MESSAGE THROUGH!!!

- Challenge yourself

  - Listen to homework a little faster than you are comfortable with

  - Strive to make a few more QSOs in the CWTs

  - Try "running" in the SSTs and MSTs

  - Practice sending a little faster …

- Practice, get OTA and HAVE FUN!!!

- In-class activities will focus on contesting at first and gradually build up to longer QSOs

About AA2IL

- Grew up in Upstate New York
  - Job Transfer brought me to San Diego in 1993
  - Current QTH is in a rural area in the foothills Northeast of SD

- First licensed in the late 1970s as a teenager
  - Went silent for over 20-years

- Retired in Oct. 2021 after 35-years as an Electrical Engineer (signal processing)

- Radio activities include
  - Chasing DX and contesting
  - VHF/UHF and satellites
  - Antennas, Linux software development and micro-controllers

- Modest HF station
  - Main rig is an FTdx3000, no amplifier
  - 100W and wire antennas

- I took this class in spring 2002
  - Biggest take-away was how crucial daily practice is to improving speed

Go Brass Flounders!

GitHub Repository

- I have set up a repository on GitHub for items related to CW and this class:
    - https://github.com/aa2il/CWA

- There have been complaints about the "new" CWA practice files. The "old" versions of these files are available there. Use these instead if you prefer:
    - "OLD Advanced QSOs"
    - "OLD Advanced Short Stories"

- The sub-folder "N1MM" contains a collection of "quick-start" guides for N1MM logger
    - N1MM is the most popular contest logging program but certainly not the only one available

- The file "Panagrams.pdf" contains a long list of panagrams you can use for sending practice.
    - Panagrams are helpful in that they hit each letter of the alphabet at least once

- Poke around and feel free to suggest other material to include there

- Get an audio player that allows you to change the replay speed (e.g. audacity)