

Gear up for the Spring VHF-UHF Day 2014 – fun is in the air!

Roger Harrison VK2ZRH

DATES: Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 November 2014.

Duration in all call areas, other than VK6: 0100 UTC Saturday to 0100 UTC Sunday.

Duration in VK6 only: 0400 UTC Saturday to 0400 UTC Sunday.

Sections – Division 1 and Division 2

A: Portable station, single operator, 24 hours.

B: Portable station, single operator, 8 hours.

C: Portable station, multiple operators, 24 hours.

D: Portable station, multiple operators, 8 hours.

E: Home station, 24 hours.

F: Rover station, 24 hours.

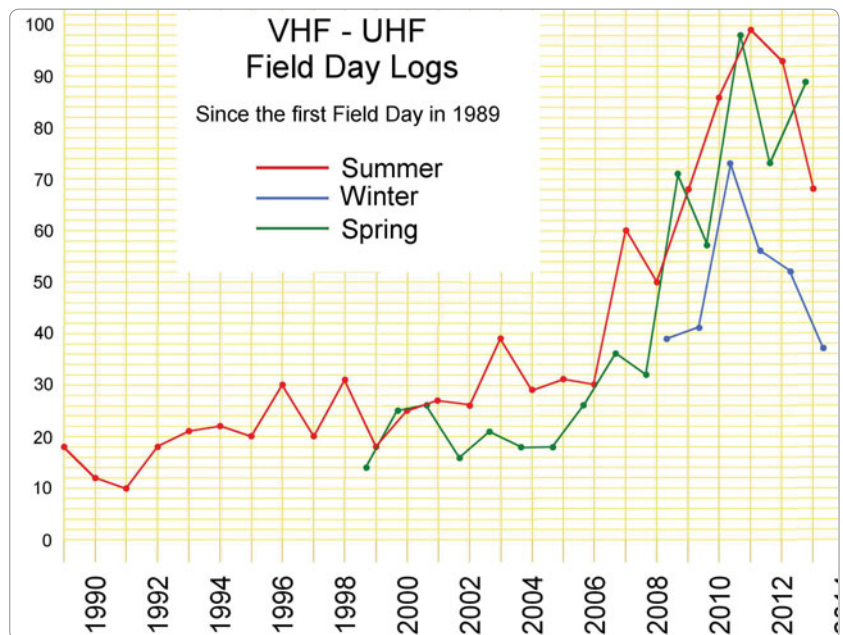


Figure 1: Showing the pattern of VHF-UHF Field Day participation since inception (courtesy of John Martin VK3KM).



Photo 1: First, check that the gear works. Chris VK3ACG and Lou VK3ALB, from Geelong ARC, checking out some 2.4 GHz field day gear before the fun began.

Spring is the time of plans and projects – Leo Tolstoy.

Springtime engenders memories of clear, sunny-bright warm days; pleasure is sensed in the very air. Field days in spring can be a pleasant excursion, with some radio fun thrown in for good measure. But spring is also a season of change. On occasion, the weather can remind us winter wasn't really that far back and can try patience in the face of persistence. Whatever, it's all experience, an adventure. While "I'm never doing that again!" might be uttered between gritted teeth after a stormy spring weekend on a field day, there's always the challenge of beating the weather odds and seeing if you can improve your score from the last field day adventure.

As with the 2014 Winter VHF-UHF Field Day, there will be two Divisions, with alternative rules for scoring: Division 1 for grid locator based scoring, and Division 2 for distance based scoring. All the other rules are common to each Division. The rules are being maintained for three contests – Winter 2014, Spring 2014 and Summer 2015. Following this trifecta, the WIA Board will consider future development of the WIA VHF-UHF Field Days.

As announced in September, John Martin VK3KM has stepped down as Contest Manager of the VHF-UHF Field Days and the Board is seeking a new person to act as Manager for Division 1.

Encouraging newbies

There have been many suggestions made about encouraging newly-licensed amateurs to join in the VHF-UHF Field Days, particularly Foundation licensees.

Take an F-call out in the field with you. Invite an F-call to your home QTH for a few hours of the contest. The same goes for any newly-licensed amateur. Get them involved and mentor them through the process of making contest contacts. Pretty soon, the fun seeps through.

Winter Field Day wrap-up

This was the inaugural contest with the two scoring methods. Pleasingly, there were 55 individual participants who submitted logs, quite an increase over the 2013 Winter Field Day of 37, and closer to the numbers for 2011 and 2012, as can be seen from Figure 1 showing the pattern of participation for the WIA VHF-UHF Field Days since being introduced in 1989. The growth in participation over time is a credit to the persistence of John Martin VK3KM who acted as Contest Manager from 1991.

Of the 55 participants in the Winter Field Day, 45 submitted logs for Division 1 and 43 submitted logs for Division 2; 60% of logs were common to the two divisions.

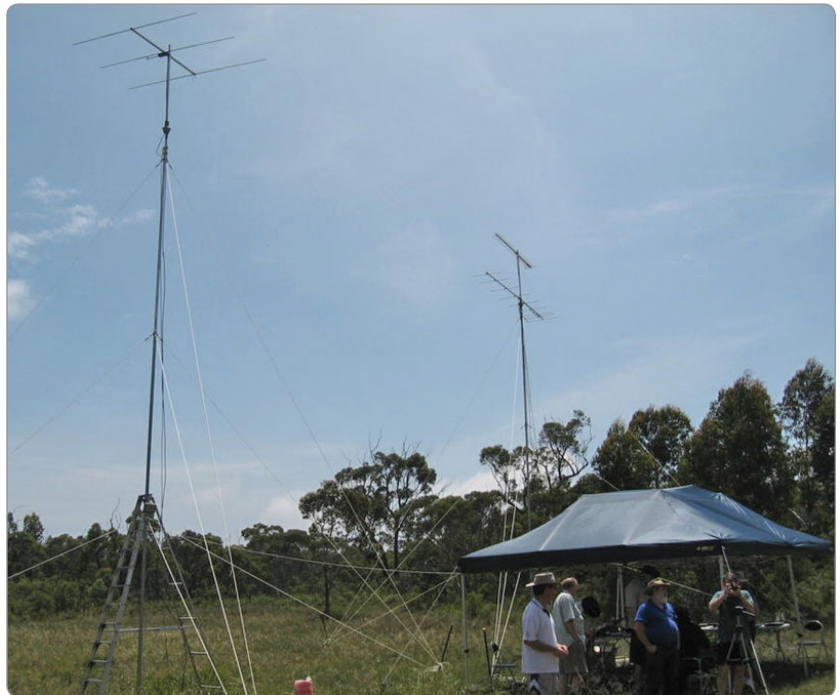


Photo 2: The Blue Mountains ARC seems to have field day antenna erection down to a fine art – 6 m on the left hand mast, 2 m and 70 cm on the right hand mast.

It seems quite a few were willing to have an each-way bet.

Division 2 results are published on page 46.

Contest Exchanges

Contestants need to exchange RS or RST reports and a serial number, as well as exchanging grid-square locators – preferably a 6-digit locator for either Division, or the 4-digit locator as a minimum if entering Division 1. Alternatively, entrants to Division 2 could exchange station coordinates, to allow accurate distance calculations to be made.

Basis of scoring

Division 1 scoring is based on totalling the number of locator squares worked and the number of contacts made, as prevailed in past contests.

Division 2 scoring is the distance worked for each contact.

Common Rules

Operating periods

Stations entering the 8 hour sections may operate for more than

8 hours, and nominate which 8 hour period they wish to claim for scoring purposes.

Entering more than one section

If a portable station operates for more than 8 hours, it may enter both the 24 hour and 8 hour sections. If the winner of a 24 hour portable section has also entered the corresponding 8 hour section, his log will be excluded from the 8 hour section.

If a portable or rover station spends part of the contest period operating from their home station, they may also enter the home station section.

Rover stations

The Rover section is for all portable or mobile stations that operate from more than two locator squares or change locator squares more than twice.

Two operators

If two operators set up a joint station with shared equipment, they may choose to enter Section A, B

or F as separate stations under their own call signs, or Section C, D or F under a single call sign. If they enter as separate stations, they may not claim contacts with each other.

Multi-operator stations

Portable stations with more than two operators must enter Section C or D. Operators of stations in Section C or D may not make contest exchanges using call signs other than the club or group call sign.

General

One call sign per station. Operation may be from any location. A station is portable only if all of its equipment is transported to a place which is not the normal location of any amateur station. Portable stations may change location during the Field Day provided the station is dismantled and reassembled each time it moves. You may work stations within your own locator square. Repeater, satellite, EME or cross-band contacts are not permitted. Contacts using digital modes with computer decoding

of the received signal are not permitted. Contacts made using modulated light are permitted, but they will be totalled separately and will not contribute to the final all-band score.

Except for CW, no contest operation is allowed below 50.150 MHz. Recognised DX calling frequencies must not be used for contest activity. Suggested procedure for SSB stations is to call on .150 or higher on each band, and QSY up to make the contest exchange.

Repeat Contacts

Stations may be worked again on each band after three hours. If either station is moved to a new location in a different locator square, repeat contacts may be made immediately. If the station moves back into the previous locator square, the three hour limit still applies to stations worked from that square.

Logs

Logs should cover the entire operating period and include the following for each contact: UTC time; frequency; station worked;

serial numbers and locator numbers exchanged.

Thanks to the work of Mike VK3AVV, his VK Contest Logger program (VKCL) now provides the facility of logging for Division 1 and Division 2. You can download the program from www.mnds.com.au/vkcl/

Division 1 scoring

For each band, score 10 points for each 4-digit locator square in which your station operates, plus 10 points for each locator square worked, plus 1 point per contact. Multiply the total by the band multiplier as follows:

6 m	2 m	70 cm	23 cm	Higher
x 1	x 3	x 5	x 8	x 10

Then total the scores for all bands used.

BONUS POINTS: Portable stations add 10 points for each portable-to-portable contact and add 5 points for each portable-to-home contact. Home stations add 5 points for each home-to-portable contact.

Table 1 sets out the scoring method.

Band	Locators Activated	+	Locators Worked	+	QSOs	x	Multiplier	=	Band Total
	(10 points each)		(10 points each)		(1 point each)		See above		
6 m	10	+	40	+	40	x	1	=	90
2 m	10	+	40	+	30	x	3	=	240
70 cm	10	+	40	+	20	x	5	=	350
etc.									
Overall Total							=		680

Table 1: Scoring for Division 1.

Division 2 scoring

All contacts are scored on the basis of one point per kilometre, multiplied by the scoring multiplier for each band in Table 2 here. A 200 km contact on 432 MHz would be $200 \times 2.7 = 540$ points. A 1000 km contact on 50 MHz would be $703 \times 1.7 = 1195.1$ points.

BONUS POINTS: Portable stations add 10 points for each portable-to-portable contact and add 5 points for each portable-to-home

contact. Home stations add 5 points for each home-to-portable contact.

Then total the scores for all bands used.

Cover Sheet

The cover sheet should contain the names and call signs of all operators; postal address; station location and Maidenhead locator (4- or 6-digit); the section(s) entered; the scoring table; and a signed declaration that the contest

manager's decision will be accepted as final.

Blank cover sheets for Division 1 and Division 2 will be available on the VHF-UHF Field Day website page.

Entries

Electronic logs are preferred. Acceptable log formats include: ASCII text, RTF, DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, MDB, or any Open Document format.

The WIA has introduced Field Day log uploading via the WIA website. You will find the link on the VHF-UHF Field Day website page.

Please do not email logs to addresses you may have used in the past.

Paper logs may be posted to the Manager, VHF-UHF Field

Day, PO Box 2042, Bayswater Vic 3153. Logs must be received by Monday, 8 December 2014. Early logs would be appreciated.

Field Day website

Put this in your browser's favourites:
<http://www.wia.org.au/members/contests/vhfuhf/>

If you haven't been there before, this site has comprehensive details about the VHF-UHF Field Days, together with previous rules and results and much general information.



Band	Multiplier	Distance Scoring
50 MHz	1.7	1 point / km to 700 km; thereafter 1 point / 100km or part thereof
144 MHz	1	1 point / km to 700 km; thereafter 1 point / 100km or part thereof
432 MHz	2.7	1 point / km to 700 km; thereafter 1 point / 100km or part thereof
1296 MHz	3.7	1 point / km.
2.3/2.4 GHz	4.4	1 point / km.
3.4 GHz	5.4	1 point / km.
5.7 GHz	6.4	1 point / km.
10 GHz	7.4	1 point / km.
24 GHz & up	10	1 point / km.

Table 2: Division 2 distance based scoring multipliers.

VK Winter Field Day Division 2 Results

Colin Hutchesson VK5DK - Division 2 Contest Manager

Division 2 Results Summary

Top Scoring Stations All Bands

A	B	C	D	E	F
VK5TE	VK5NE	VK5LZ	VK5LZ	VK3MY	VK5KK

Top Scoring Stations Four Bands Only

A	B	C	D	E	F
VK5KBJ	VK3YE	VK3KQ	VK3KQ	VK3MY	VK5ZT

Top Scoring F Call Station Section B: VK5FSKS

Single Operator 24 hr: Winner: VK5TE 24361, 2nd: VK5KBJ 20899, 3rd: VK4OE 14936

Single Operator 8 hr: Winner: VK5NE 33737, 2nd: VK5TE 18191, 3rd: VK5KBJ 15036

Multi-Operator 24 hr: Winner: VK5LZ 117213, 2nd: VK3KQ 83740, 3rd: VK3ALB 59680

Multi-Operator 8 hr: Winner: VK3KQ 36523, 2nd: VK3ALB 28886, 3rd: VK4WIS 18266

Home Station 24 hr: Winner: VK3MY 37654, 2nd: VK5DK 19736, 3rd: VK3QI 16300

Rover Station 24 hr: Winner: VK5KK 49461, 2nd: VK5ZT 32445, 3rd: VK3QM 11096

The Winter Field Day this year had two divisions with the usual Grid Square scoring and this year the WIA has added a Distance Based scoring division which has been trialled as well.

As usual with a new concept, there have been some minor hiccups which have mostly been overcome.

I must thank Mike VK3AVV for his support in writing the scoring program for Division Two and his support in getting the results checked and adding a few extra details in the results for each station, such as average distance per contact over the entire Field Day log, so each operator will be able to check out this added feature. With Mike being able to check the validity of each contact, some contacts have been removed from the scoring in some instances.

If you have any suggestions on improvements for future Field Days Division 2 scoring or general comments, where there can be improvement, please get in contact with me, so we can make alterations if it is felt that it will make these better Field Days. Thanks for the solid support for Distance Based scoring in the Winter Field Day.

Congratulations to all the winners of the various sections and to all other participants who braved the cold weather in the Southern parts of Australia to go out portable.

Please note that the top score in Section D was VK5LZ The Elizabeth Amateur Radio Club, but as they won the 24 hr section and under the Contest rules they were not eligible to win both sections.

73 Colin Hutchesson VK5DK

