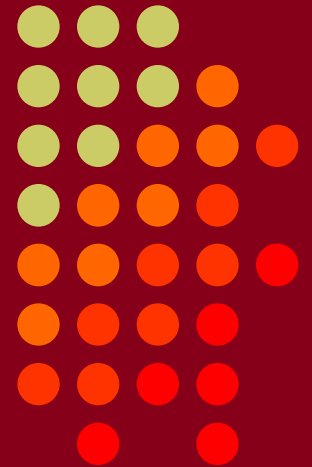


CTU Presents

Contesting with Integrity Randy Thompson, K5ZD



• CTU •
CONTEST
UNIVERSITY

ICOM®



Integrity is the practice of being honest and showing a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values.

It is the bedrock principle that radio contesting depends on.

Explaining Radio Contesting to a non-ham



“We operate for 24/48 hours, log all the stations we contact, and see who can make the most contacts in the most states or countries.”

“How do you know who won?”

“We send our logs to the sponsor, and they check them.”

“How do you know someone didn’t cheat?”

“We trust, but verify as best we can.”

“What do you get for winning?”

“Nothing.”

What is a game?



- A competition with rules to define constraints and scoring
- Ending in a definite result
- Games provide players with
 - An amusement or pastime
 - A means of exploring one's own capabilities
 - An opportunity to share experience and learning

Contesting is not a Fair Game



- Unequal stations
- Unequal geography
- Unequal propagation
- Different operating time
- Privately conducted

**Yet we calculate scores,
stack rank them,
and celebrate the “winners”**

Why do we do radio contests?



- Personal Satisfaction
 - Better score than last year
 - Better score than “that guy”
 - Cool band opening
 - High rates, crushing pileups
- Be part of a team
 - Help your club (or multi-op) win
- Peer recognition (aka ego)

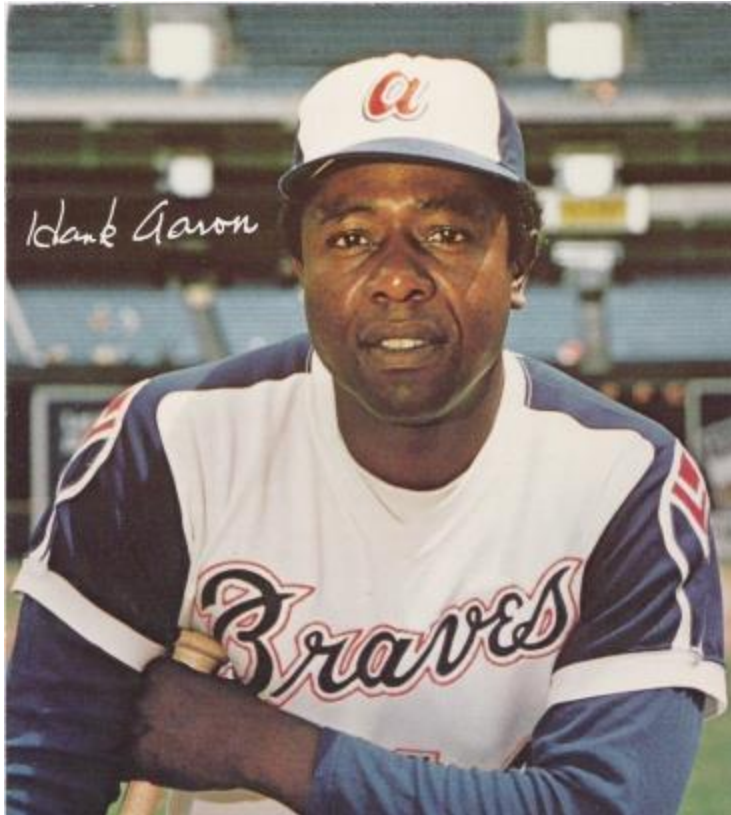


Peer recognition?

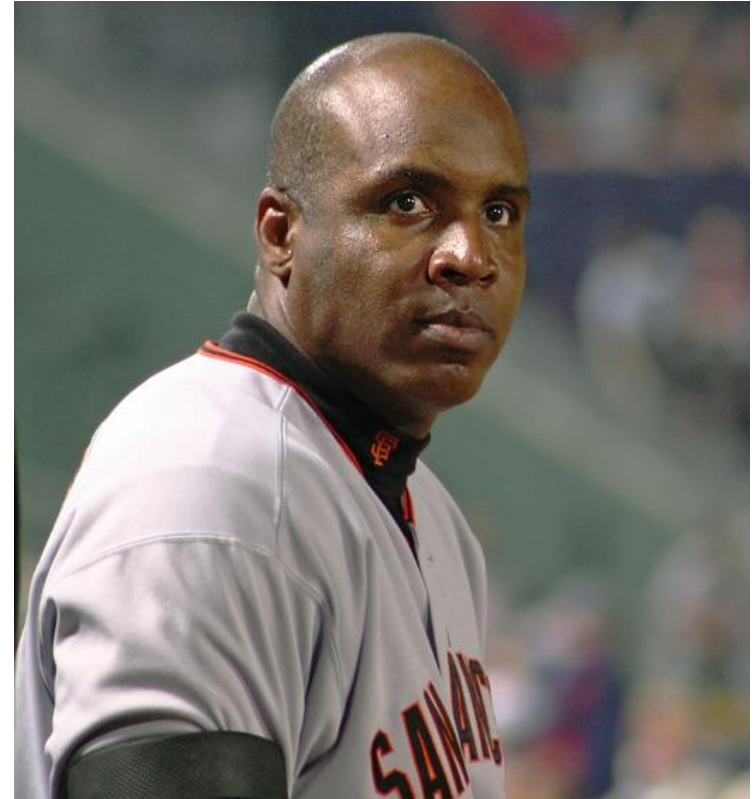


- You are recognized by the sum total of your achievements and how you went about achieving those results
- That recognition is strongly influenced by what other people say about you

Competitors earn respect; cheaters do not



Hank Aaron
755 Home Runs



Barry Bonds
762 Home Runs

Negative Peer Recognition



- “That station was too loud in the NAQP.”
- “That guy uses a pair of 8877s and has remote receivers in Europe.”
- “Joe uses packet but claims unassisted.”
- “Ken had a second operator help him.”
- “Larry always splatters to keep a clear frequency.”

While most of these examples can not be proven – they are often based upon something not being quite right about an entry.

Why people cheat

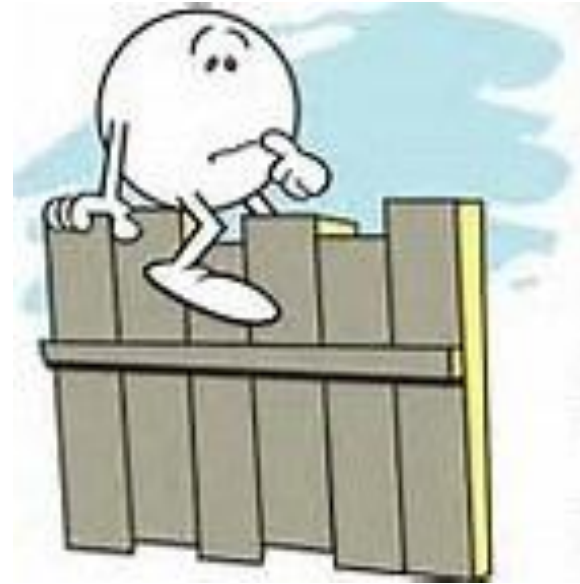


- Desire to be a “hero” on the field of competition
- Achieve immortality via community legend, fame, and lasting peer recognition
- Seeking current community “stardom”
- Prove superiority over others (rivalry)
- A means to prove self-worth

I don't actually cross the fence



I just lean on it



I just straddle it a tiny bit !

Rationalizations for cheating



- *Everybody is doing it*
 - (#1 Reason, and provably false)
- Nobody is hurt
 - (*Except those you beat*)
- Overcome unfair disadvantages
 - (*Life is not fair*)
- Nobody is watching
 - (*Not any longer*)
- Rules don't specifically disallow a practice
- Rules apply to others, not me/us

“All the top guys are cheating”



- **No, they are not**
 - There are a few bad apples – this is true in any sport
 - They don't last long
- This belief is the primary reason for cheating - in virtually every sport studied!

“I’m not a big gun...it doesn’t matter if I cut corners a bit”



- **Yes it does!**
- Bad habits early on become seriously bad habits later
- Your reputation is established early
- Dealing with temptation is hard...“It’s easy to just give in! And it keeps getting easier.”



How do you know what to do?



- Written Rules
 - Specified in the contest rules
 - Black and white
- Unwritten “Rules”
 - Interpreted norms
 - Gray

Some written rules are very clear (some people break these anyway)



- **“A. Single Operator categories:** For all single operator categories, only one person (the operator) can contribute to the final score during the official contest period.”
- “Total output power per band must not exceed 1500 watts or the output power regulations of the country in which the entrant is operating, whichever is less.”

More Examples of Written Rules



- Off times must be a minimum of 60 minutes in length.
- The log MUST show the correct serial number sent and received for each contact.
- The exchange consists of signal report and serial number. Serial numbers sent must be progressive, starting with 001.
- Self-spotting or asking other stations to spot you is not allowed.

Essence of Unwritten Rules



- Just because it's not specifically prohibited by written rules doesn't mean you should do it!
- Keep the contest on the radio and within the contest period
- Don't give or take unfair advantage of others
- Learn and follow the spirit of the rules

Examples of Unwritten “Rules”



Do NOT

- Make pre-arranged schedules
- Ask friends to work you ... only
- Work friends with multiple calls
- Intentionally QRM others in anger or to prevent them from making QSOs

Do

- Identify frequently
- Work and spot stations equally
- Encourage club members to work everyone
- Make an effort to help casual callers enjoy the contest and make a contact

No log washing



- “Research” using QRZ.com, Spot history, 3830 reports, LoTW
- Replaying the contest to change the log
- Asking others who they worked or if a call sign is correct
- Using email to confirm QSOs or get fills
- “Fixing” off times or band changes
- It’s **over** when the 2359 rolls over to 0000

Play fair



- Do not exceed power limits for your category
- Just because the knobs go to 11...



(Search YouTube for “Spinal Tap” “these go to 11” – or watch the whole movie).
See also: “smoke”, “gas”, “soup”, “smash”, “Eimac antenna tuner”. . .

At some point, you make a decision



Play by the rules

- Work on improving skills
- Power consistent with class
- Don't use cluster when single op
- Submit log when contest ends

Make your own rules

- Work on being obnoxious
- More power (turn to "11")
- Use the cluster – who will know?
- Take time to scrub log (fix calls, add calls, "adjust" times, etc.)



Honor Code



- You are responsible for your own reputation
 - Follow the rules!
 - Don't participate with people who cheat
- Lead by example
 - You never know who is listening or watching
 - Don't do anything you would not want to be made public
- Be vocal
 - Confront cheating when you see it
 - Every incident is an opportunity to teach proper behavior

Peer Pressure



- Good
 - Encourage others to follow the rules
 - People respect those who are true to their beliefs
- Bad
 - Letting others influence you into not doing the right thing
 - “everyone else is doing it.”

Applying Positive Peer Pressure



- Be aware of your motives
 - Is it personal?
 - If necessary, enlist others to help deliver the message
- Give the benefit of the doubt
 - They may not realize what they are doing is against the rules
- Choose the right time
 - Can they listen without feeling attacked?
- Don't be angry or accusatory
 - Treat the issue as a mistake, not a crime
 - Focus on actions, not character
- Be there
 - People cheat because they see others get away with it
 - Not confronting the problem hurts everyone

Scenario 1



- You discover a local contester uses cluster spotting and enters as single operator unassisted. What do you do?
 - He doesn't win anything so assume it doesn't matter
 - Avoid speaking to him ever again
 - Publicly call him a cheater at the next club meeting
 - Send a letter to the contest sponsor
 - Call him up and ask if he is aware of the rules for the single-operator category

Scenario 2



- You are invited to a multi-op and upon arrival, you discover they are running 2.5 kW. What do you do?
 - You are there, loud is good, operate anyway
 - Turn the power down to 1500W when you are operating
 - Loudly encourage the other ops to follow your example
 - Quietly ask the owner if he always runs this much power
 - Ask the other ops if they are comfortable with this
 - Leave
 - Send a note to the contest sponsor and FCC

The RIGHT way to do contesting

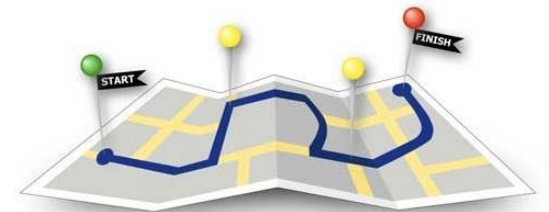


- Play fair
 - Obey the rules, remember this presentation
- Try to do better next time
 - Congratulate the winner
 - Keep learning
 - Improve your skills, station



Have fun!

Make your enjoyment of contesting
be more about the journey,
than the destination



Who are you?



- What does contesting mean to you?
- How important is your radio identity to you?

Who is the final judge ?



- The person in the mirror

“Success without honor is an unseasoned dish; it will satisfy your hunger, but it won't taste good.”

- *Joe Paterno, football coach*

- Your peers

“Yeah, I know that guy. He cheats.”

- *Anonymous Contester*

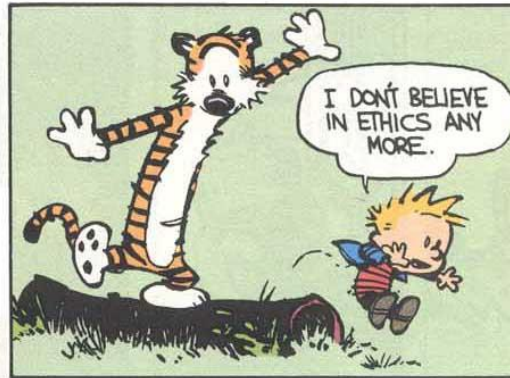


Final Thought

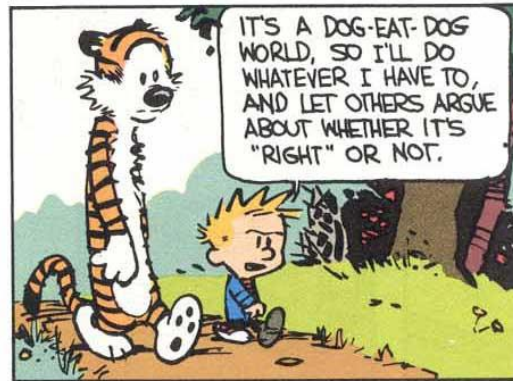
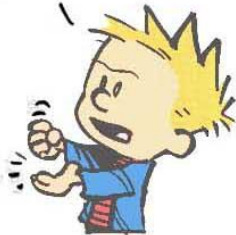


Calvin
and
Hobbes

BY WATKINSON



GET WHAT YOU CAN WHILE THE GETTING'S GOOD - THAT'S WHAT I SAY! MIGHT MAKES RIGHT! THE WINNERS WRITE THE HISTORY BOOKS!



Acknowledgments



- This presentation draws on material developed by:
 - Ken Adams, K5KA (SK)
 - Larry Tyree, N6TR
 - Dave McCarty, K5GN
 - Ward Silver, NØAX
 - Kirk Pickering, K4RO
 - Tim Duffy, K3LR
 - Joel Harrison, W5ZN

The Contest Code of Ethics

www.wwrof.org



1. I will learn and obey the rules of any contest I enter, including the rules of my entry category.
2. I will obey the rules for amateur radio in my country.
3. I will not modify my log after the contest by using additional data sources to correct callsign/exchange errors.
4. I will accept the judging and scoring decisions of the contest sponsor as final.
5. I will adhere to the DX Code of Conduct in my operating style (see dx-code.org).
6. I will yield my frequency to any emergency communications activity.
7. I will operate my transmitter with sufficient signal quality to minimize interference to others.