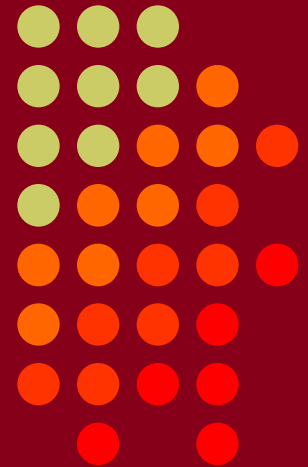


# CTU Presents

**Play by the Rules – Your Most  
Important Operating Skill  
Ward Silver, NØAX**



• CTU •  
CONTEST  
UNIVERSITY

ICOM®

# Purpose of this Session



- Discussion of what ethical behavior is in radio contesting
- Understand the impact of unethical behavior
- Encourage participants to take ownership of their own behavior and encourage others to do the same



# Why do we play games?



- What is a game?
  - A contest with rules to determine a winner
  - An amusement or pastime
- Games provide players with
  - A means of exploring one's own capabilities
  - An opportunity to look at, understand, and experience things
  - Lessons about themselves and possibly the world.

# An unusual game



- Entrants keep their own score
- Complex rules govern scoring
- Individuals and “team” entries permitted
- Some events include off-times
- Winners of the top-level event often invest \$50k or more and travel to favorable locations
- An on-line network helps participants increase their scores
- Spectators don’t find it particularly interesting

# Is this Radio Contesting?



# Why do we do games?



- FUN and EXCITEMENT!!!
  - Self Improvement
  - Personal Satisfaction
  - Financial Rewards
- Internal
- Peer Recognition
- External

# Why do we do radio contests?



- FUN and EXCITEMENT!!
  - Self Improvement
  - Personal Satisfaction
  - ~~Financial Rewards~~
- Internal
- 
- Peer Recognition
- External

# What is this peer recognition?



- You are recognized by your achievements and how you went about achieving those results
- Your recognition is strongly influenced by what other people say about you



# Negative Peer Recognition Examples



- That station was too loud in the NAQP.
- That guy uses a pair of 8877s and has remote receivers in Europe.
- Joe uses spots but enters as unassisted.
- Ken had a second operator help him.
- Larry operated with a broad signal to push away nearby stations and keep his channel clear.

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

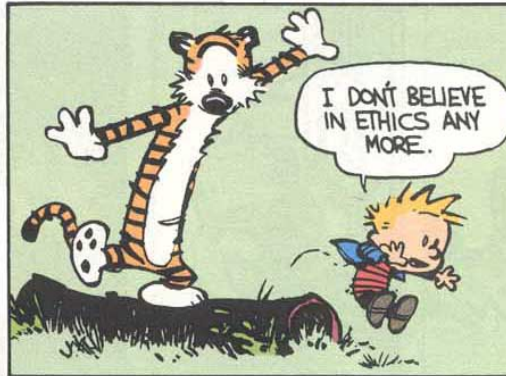
# Ethics and Respect



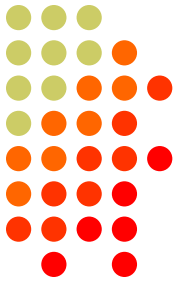
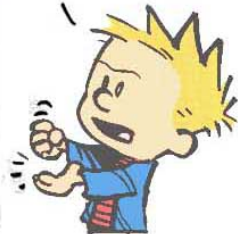
- Ethics comes from respect...
- Respect for *others*
- Respect for *the game*
- Respect for *yourself*

# calvin and Hobbes

by WATTERSON



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

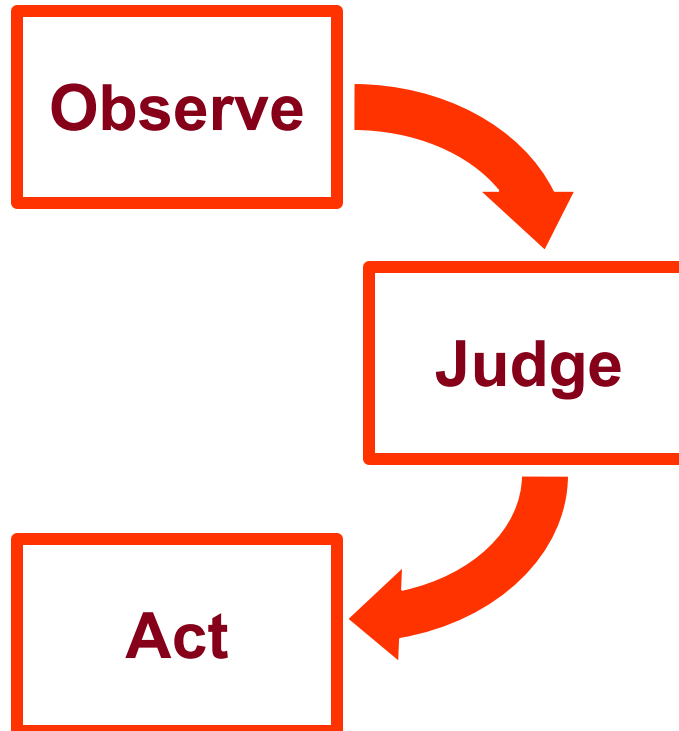


# Ethics and Respect

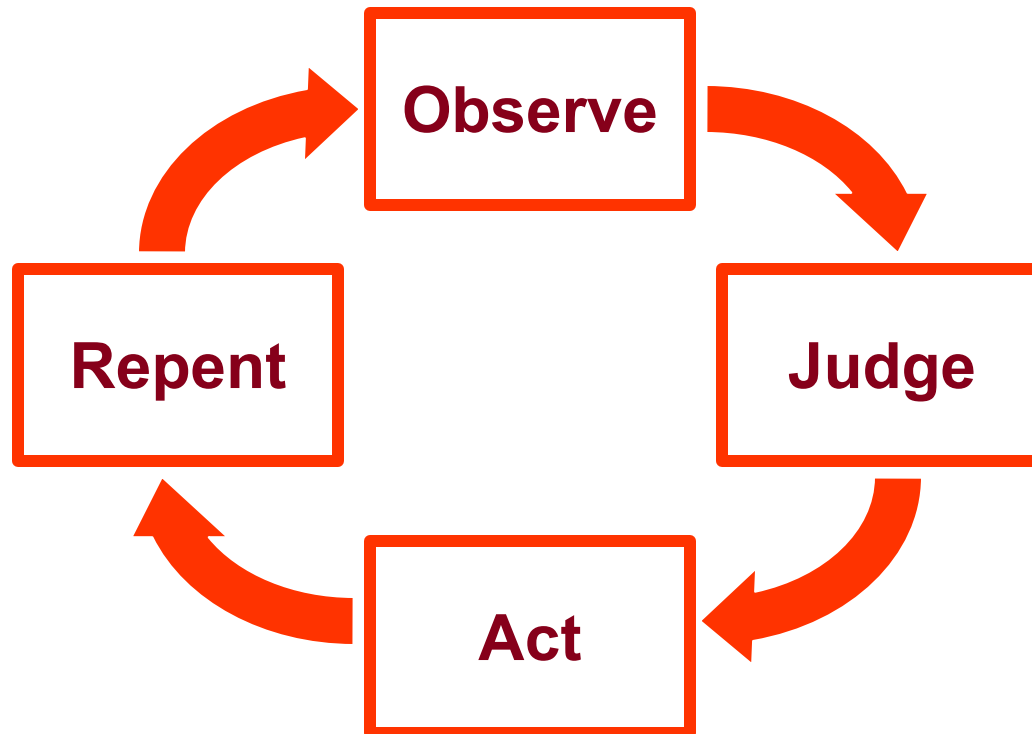


- Ethics comes from respect
- Respect for *others*
- Respect for *the game*
- Respect for *yourself*
- To *get* respect, you have to *give* respect

# What do we mean ... Ethics?



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# What do we mean ... Ethics?



- Ethics denote the theory of right and wrong actions
  - Written and unwritten codes of principles and values that govern decisions and actions
- Morals indicate their practice within guidelines
  - Standards for determining the difference between good and bad decision making and behavior
- Ethics are...knowing the difference between right and wrong and choosing to do what is right.

# Ethics in Contesting

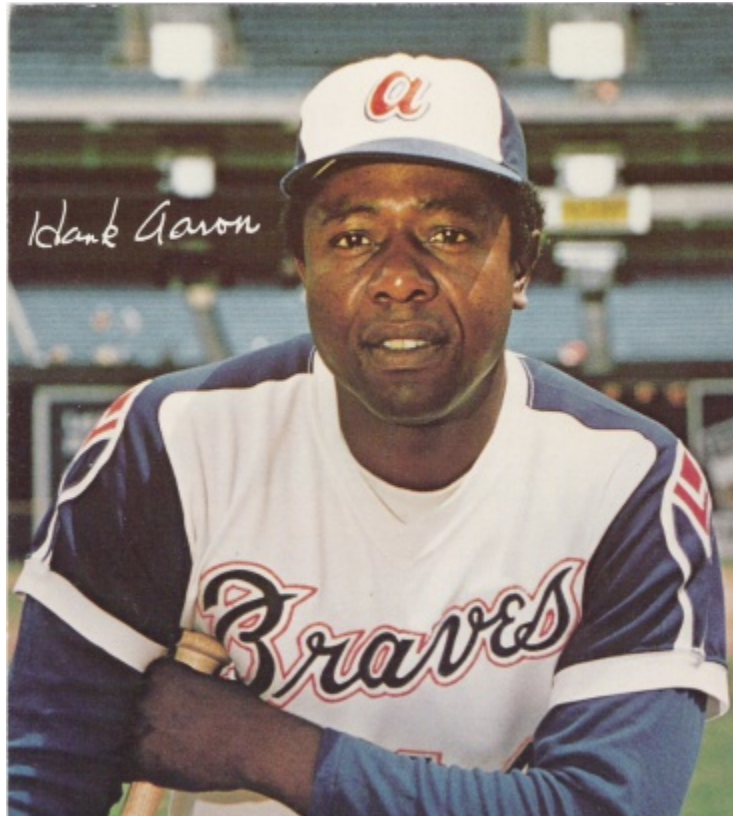


- Choosing to do the right thing even when no one is looking
- With SDR technology, people *\*are\** looking at what happens on the air
- Unobservable rules require participants to apply ethics





# Why do ethics matter?



Hank Aaron  
755 Home Runs



Barry Bonds  
762 Home Runs

# Why do ethics matter?



**Without ethics and respect –  
we have NOTHING**

# Explaining Radio Contesting to a non-ham (or non-contester)



“We operate for 4/24/48 hours, log all the stations we contact, and see who can make the most contacts in the most states, countries”

*“How do you know who won?”*

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

*“How do you prevent cheating?”*

# How do we know what to do?



- Written Rules

- Specified by the contest sponsor in writing
- Black and white
- May, can, should, must...

- Unwritten Rules

- Expectations about behavior
- Interpreted norms
- Gray areas

# 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.”

# Play Fair



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



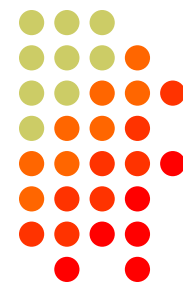
See also: “headroom,” “smoke,” “gas,” “soup,” “smash,” “Eimac antenna tuner” . . .

# 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



- “**Can**” is not the same as “**Should**”
- 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
- **Do** identify frequently
- **Do not** ask friends to work you ... only
- **Do** encourage club members - work everyone
- **Do not** work friends with multiple calls
- **Do** work and spot stations equally

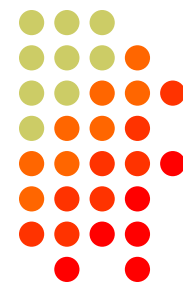
# Examples of Unwritten “Rules”



- **Do not** call or text message multipliers
- **Do** make an effort to help casual callers enjoy the contest and make a contact
- **Do not** let others “help” your single-op effort

See the ARRL’s *“HF Contesting - Good Practices, Interpretations & Suggestions”*

# No “Log Washing”



- Using QRZ.com, spot history, 3830 reports, LoTW, club databases
- Using utilities to analyze and correct the log
- Replaying the contest to change the log
- Asking others who they worked or if a call sign is correct
- “Fixing” off times or band changes
- It’s **over** when the 2359 rolls over to 0000

# How do people justify cheating?



- Everybody does it
- I like being an outlaw
- It was exciting to push the limits
- Nobody was getting hurt
- Nobody was watching
- Rules don't mean much to me, I'm bigger than that
- It doesn't make a difference anyway
- Little to lose and much to gain by it
- It helped me overcome my unfair disadvantage
- I had to do it to win!
- The rules weren't clear but it seemed to me it might be OK
- The rule I broke was unfair anyway

# “All the guys at the top 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 the primary reason for cheating - in virtually every sport studied!
- This mindset is a contagious malady – don't let it get a foothold with your peers

# “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.”

# Technology - A Game Changer



- More options
  - More rules
    - More decisions
      - More bad decisions
        - More bad outcomes
        - Etc
- Ethics is more important than ever
- Respect is more important than ever
- Figure out where your “good arrow” points and let it be your guide when making decisions

# Honor Code



- You are responsible for your own reputation
  - Follow the rules!
  - Don't participate with people who cheat – you will be known by the company you keep
- 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



- Social pressure by members of one's peer group to take a certain action, adopt certain values, or otherwise conform in order to be accepted.
- 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.”

# From “The Code of Birding Ethics”



- If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

# 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
  - Take the opportunity to encourage taking the right path
- Choose the right time and place
  - 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

# Communication Success is Defined by the Receiver



THE FAR SIDE/GARY LARSON

*What we say to dogs*



*What they hear*

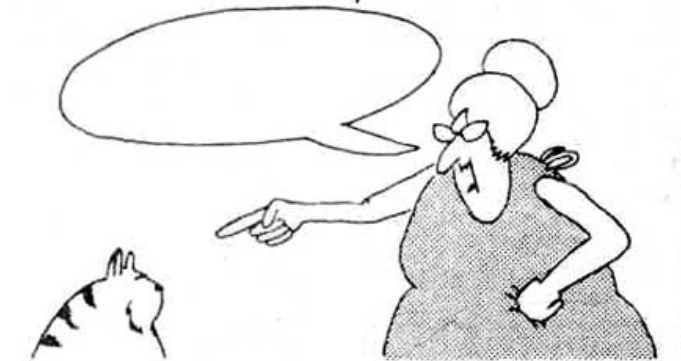


THE FAR SIDE/GARY LARSON

*What we say to cats... 12-14*



*What they hear*



# Scenario 1



- You discover a local contester uses cluster spotting and enters an unassisted category. What do you do?
  - She doesn't win anything so assume it doesn't matter
  - Avoid speaking to her ever again
  - Publicly call her a cheater at the next club meeting
  - Send a letter to the contest sponsor
  - Call her up and ask if she is aware of the rules about using spotting information

# 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 1500 W when you're operating
  - Loudly encourage the other ops to follow your example
  - Quietly ask the owner if he always runs excess power
  - Leave
  - Send a note to the contest sponsor and FCC

# Scenario 3



- A local contester has key clicks that wipe out large chunks of the band. What do you do?
  - Sharpen up YOUR keying and give him a dose of his own medicine!
  - Send “KLIX” on his frequency anonymously
  - Call him, tell him he has key clicks, and sign your call
  - Contact him after the contest, explain the problem, and ask to help fix the problem
  - Notify the contest sponsor and his rig’s manufacturer

# The Contest Code of Ethics

## [www.wwrof.org](http://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 call sign/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](http://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.



# The RIGHT Way



- Play fair
  - Obey the rules, remember this presentation
- Try to do better next time
  - Improve your skills, station
- Make your enjoyment of contesting be about the journey, not the destination

# Who are you?



- What does winning the contest mean to you?
- How important is your radio identity to you?

# Who is the final judge ?



- The person in the mirror



- Your peers

“Yeah, I know that guy. He cheats.”

- *Anonymous Contester*

# Final Thought



- **Do unto others as you would have them do unto you – nothing else matters.**

# Acknowledgments



- This presentation draws on material developed by Ken Adams, K5KA (SK), Randy Thompson, K5ZD, Doug Grant K1DG, Larry Tyree N6TR, and Dave McCarty K5GN
- Analogies with birding originally developed by Dick Norton, N6AA