

## Ohio QSO Party

### A Guide for Ohio Stations

Why join the party? To get on the air, have fun, and work a few (or many!) like minded hams during the contest period. In the Ohio QSO Party (OhQP), Ohioans are the "DX" and are sought out. Simple antennas can easily generate pileups or work most anyone you can hear, so get on and join the fun!

The following gives some brief but important suggestions on how to participate and submit your log (possibly making you eligible for an award).

The Ohio QSO Party occurs on the fourth Saturday of August. *The 2011 contest is on Saturday August 27th.* The contest period extends from 1200 EDT [noon] to 2400 EDT [midnight] (1600Z Saturday until 0400Z Sunday). All stations may operate the full twelve hours.

While you can operate 10, 15, 20, 40 & 80m on SSB and CW, the bands with the most activity are 20, 40 and 75/80 meters. 15 and 10m can be useful as the sunspots return, or if there is a sporadic E skip opening. And don't wait till dark to check 75/80m, as the band is abuzz with activity from the start of the contest.

The suggested frequencies are 3800, 7200, 14250, 21300, 28450 on SSB; and on CW, up 45 kHz from the bottom of the band. Most activity is +/- 20 kHz of those frequencies.

SSB or CW? Use both if you can! Also, use whatever antennas you have to get on. Even stealth antennas, verticals or low dipoles work great. In fact, most of the "big guns" find that low dipoles for 40 and 80 are often the best antennas for this contest!

If you're operating from Ohio, you may work any station, anywhere in the world for point credit. During each QSO, give out a sequential QSO number (starting with 1) and your county name. On CW use the 4 letter standard county abbreviations found on the OhQP website. On SSB simply saying "Tuscarawas County" will likely confuse someone not familiar with Ohio's counties, so instead you might say "Tuscarawas - Tango Uniform Sierra Charlie".

If you are outside of Ohio, you may work only stations inside Ohio for contest credit. During each QSO, give out your sequential QSO number (starting with 1) and your state, Canadian province, or "DX" if outside US/VE. On CW, please use standard 2-letter state/province abbreviations, or send "DX" if outside US/VE.

Ohio stations can work any station a total of ten times for point credit: once per band and mode (e.g. you can work a station on 10, 15, 20, 40, 80m on both SSB and CW). Non-Ohio stations can work Ohio stations for a total of 10 times following the same rules.

While Ohioans can work anyone, one way to boost your score is to work as many multipliers (mults) as you can. For Ohio stations, mults are the 88 Ohio counties, states (49) and Canadian provinces (11) for a total of 148 mults. Better yet, you can work the mults on both CW and SSB for credit, so there are a total of  $2 \times 148 = 296$  mults. Since there are so many mults in this contest, to maximize your score you should balance working QSOs with maximizing your mult total.

The following band-by-band overview will help Ohio stations find the QSOs and mults they need to boost their score:

**75/80m:** For Ohioans to work other Ohioans (and nearby states), the only reliable band may be 75/80m. Activity starts at the beginning of the contest, but late afternoon and on is very good for working much of the country as well as in-state QSOs. Being summer time, QRN levels may be challenging, so keep your fingers crossed for good weather! With the big push in 2010 to get

Ohio stations on the air, there's a definite shift towards 75/80m QSOs as compared to previous years. I also think many ops have realized 75/80m is the best and most reliable place for Ohio stations to work other Ohio stations and the important Ohio county mults.

**40m:** Historically it's the best band for Ohio stations. During the day, you will work stations out to 500-700 miles, which contains much of the US population. As the sunspots have started to creep up, there's often short skip when Ohio stations can work all over Ohio as well as working stations 500-700 miles away. If you hear other Ohio stations on 40, it's THE place to be! As the sun sets, you will start to work farther west, and if you are lucky, some Europeans will call in too. There's always a lot of activity on this band.

**20m:** This is the easiest band to work the western stations and mults. While 20 is mostly a daytime band, you can often work stations on this band for most of the OhQP. Often there's shorter skip on 20m, so you may be able to work stations in the 500 mile range at the same time as the western stations. Don't forget to log the DX stations that call in, as they are good for QSO points.

**15 & 10m:** As the sunspots start to creep up, it's worth checking these bands for activity. 15m often has strong signals, though the volume of QSOs may be lighter than on the lower bands. Also late-summer Sporadic-E skip propagation is a possibility which can bring these bands alive. Don't forget your neighbors are easy to work on these bands! If you hear someone even a few counties away on 20-40-80m, you might ask them to QSY to 15 and 10 as it can be a quick and easy way to work 2 or 4 QSOs with the other station.

**Mobiles & Rovers:** Mobiles and rovers are an integral part of the success of the Ohio QSO Party, as a number of counties don't have fixed-station activity and the mobiles are the only way to work that county. Every time an Ohio mobile or rover station changes county, they can be worked again for QSO and mult credit. A mobile station is typically in a county for just 15-30 minutes, so you need to be quick to catch them.

Packet or internet spotting (DX Summit, County Hunter Spots (W6RK) etc) is allowed for all categories to promote activity, and it's a great way to find and catch the mobiles.

Mobiles are naturally going to be weaker than fixed stations. To help work around this, we try to keep 3545 kHz clear for use by mobile stations, especially during the day. That way, if you listen there and hear activity, it will usually be a mobile station, and usually it's a rare county!

**Calling CQ:** Ohio stations - don't be shy! Instead of just searching and pouncing for QSOs, try calling CQ and see what happens. Most out of state stations just tune the bands looking for Ohio stations, so if you don't call some CQ's, they will never find you.

## LOGGING

For logging, using computers is by far the easiest during the contest, and especially for sending in your logs. Free software and templates for several popular logging programs are available on the OhQP web site.

Before sending in your log, please check it over for some common mistakes: Do not include the /M or /XXXX (county abbreviation) as part of the call sign. Just put the county or state in the appropriate logging field. Our OhQP log checking computers will figure out if the station is a mobile or rover.

Check the date and time, use UTC, and remember that the UTC date changes in the late afternoon/early evening (depending on your time zone).

Even if you only make a few QSOs, please send in your log. Every submitted log, no matter how small, helps the contest sponsor. Even a small log may set a county record as some counties don't have a lot of activity.

Nearly all computer-based logs export a Cabrillo format file (standard for contest logs), which is the preferred file format. If your software doesn't support Cabrillo, don't worry, just send in whatever format you can (typically ADIF). If all else fails, just print out your log and send it in. For electronic entries, please name your file as "mycall.log" .

Send your electronic Cabrillo logs to: [logs@OhQP.org](mailto:logs@OhQP.org)

Paper logs go via snail mail to:

Ohio QSO Party c/o  
Jim Stahl, K8MR  
30499 Jackson Road  
Chagrin Falls, OH 44022-1730

Logs must be submitted or postmarked within 30 days of the contest. For the full and official rules, please go to: <http://www.ohqp.org/adminRules.htm>

We hope this was helpful! If you have more questions, contact any of the contest organizers, or join the OhQP reflector.

See you on August 27th,2011!

Kenny K2KW