

British Top Band DF Association

RULES FOR QUALIFYING EVENTS AND THE NATIONAL FINAL

1. Events

- (a) Qualifying Events will be open to anyone but only members of the Association may win trophies or take part in the National Final. All competitors take part on the strict understanding that they and the members of their teams take part entirely at their own risk and that neither the BTBDFFA nor the organising club shall be held responsible for any loss or damage resulting from taking part in the contest. Every named person taking part in the contest will be required to sign on behalf of themselves and the members of the team on a form provided by the organiser at the start acknowledging this and the rest of the rules. Only the named person may officially locate the hidden station and that person must be carrying the form or clock key and the set at the time. Contests will be held on Sunday afternoons, commencing at 13.20 and concluding at 16.30.
- (b) The National Final will be held after the Qualifying Events have been decided and only the following will be allowed to compete:
 - (i) The winner of the National Final in the previous year.
 - (ii) Competitors qualifying in the Qualifying Events.
 - (iii) One or more competitors specifically invited by the contest committee.

Only entries under (i) and (ii) will be entitled to win the trophy.

The National Final will be held on a Sunday afternoon commencing at 12.50 and concluding at 16.30.

Note: all times are clock times.

2. Transmitters

In the Qualifying Events, competitors will be required to locate two hidden transmitters and, on the National Final only, will be required to locate three. All transmitters will operate, using CW and amplitude modulation, in the 1.8MHz band, each with a maximum carrier level of 9dBW and the power output will remain constant throughout the event.

3. Identification

For identification purposes, the call signs and frequencies (which will be separated by at least 10kHz) will be announced at the start of each event. Identification signals will be given in CW for the first four minutes of the first transmission, immediately followed by two minutes of telephony.

4. Signals

- (a) After 13.26 (12.56 on the National Final) competitors who are satisfied with their bearings may leave the start at their own discretion.
- (b) If any of the competitors fail to detect signals from any of the transmitters they will, at 13.35 (13.05 on the National Final), be given a bearing(s) which, when drawn on the appropriate 1:50,000 OS map, will pass within 4km (8cm) of the transmitter(s) they have not detected.

- (c) If none of the competitors detects a signal from any one or more of the transmitters, the starter, in addition to providing the information above, will state whether the transmitter is:

less than 10km, or
more than 10km but less than 20km, or
more than 20km

from the start location.

5. Transmission Times

Qualifying Events:

13.20 - 13.24 CW
13.24 - 13.26 Telephony
14.00 - 14.02 CW
14.02 - 14.04 Telephony
14.04 - 16.00 Random
16.00 - 16.02 Telephony
16.02 - 16.15 Random
16.15 - 16.30 Continuous

National Final:

12.50 - 12.54 CW
12.54 - 12.56 Telephony
13.30 - 13.32 CW
13.32 - 13.34 Telephony
13.34 - 16.00 Random
16.00 - 16.02 Telephony
16.02 - 16.15 Random
16.15 - 16.30 Continuous

After 14.04 (13.34 on the National Final) transmissions will continue on telephony for not less than two minute periods at irregular intervals, such periods to be not more than 15 minutes apart. Each transmission will be preceded by an identification signal, of at least 20 seconds duration, in CW of the general form 'TEST, TEST, TEST DF DE G...../P. After 16.00, transmissions will continue on telephony only. Transmitters will operate on the same fixed schedule of transmissions, i.e. operating simultaneously until 14.04 (13.34 on the National Final) subsequently operating independently, except for the 16.00 transmission. Where severe interference is known to exist, slow CW may be used in place of telephony.

Contests will terminate at 16.30 and in the event of no one finding all the transmitters in the time allowed, the contest will be declared a one or two station contest, as the case may be, and the winner declared on that basis.

6. Locating Hidden Stations

Competitors may locate stations in any order and upon arrival at each station the competitor must hand the numbered entry form or clock card directly to a member of the transmitter crew. If forms are in use, the crew will initial the form, mark on it the time of arrival and hand it back to the competitor. If clock cards are in use, the crew will ensure that the card is correctly registered in the clock system and hand it back to the competitor. In either case, the crew will keep a written log of the arrival times of competitors.

The transmitter operator, or assistant, must, if challenged by a competitor holding a DF receiver, admit to being one of the hidden DF stations.

7. Qualifiers and Winners

- (a) If seven or more qualifying Events are held in any one year the first two competitors, not having previously qualified, to locate their second transmitter, will go forward to the National Final. If there are six or fewer qualifying Events the first three competitors, as defined above, go forward to the National Final.
- (b) In the National Final the first competitor to locate his third transmitter (or second transmitter if no one has located three) will be declared the winner.

8. General

- (a) Competitors searching likely transmitter sites prior to the commencement of a competition will, at the discretion of the BTBDFA committee, be disqualified from the competition.
- (b) The hidden stations will be located at least 50 metres from any inhabited building and will be directly accessible to competitors without their entering, crossing or trespassing upon property in private occupation.
- (c) The hidden stations will be located at least 15 metres from any public highway.
- (d) Transmitter locations and starting point shall be covered by one sheet of the Ordnance Survey map (1:50,000 series) and the sheet number must be published prior to the event.
- (e) Each competitor must sign on at the starting point and must receive an entry form numbered to conform with the entry on the starter's sheet.
- (f) A team shall consist of a competitor plus not more than three others.
- (g) Tampering with the transmitter aerial by the competitor or the team is strictly forbidden and may entail disqualification of the competitor. Competitors and their teams must leave the vicinity of each transmitter immediately the signed form or clock card has been handed back to the competitor.
- (h) Only one portable receiver, capable of being tuned to the 1.8 MHz band, shall be carried by any team during the event, and the competitor, at the time of his arrival at each hidden transmitter, must have the receiver with him and, if required, must demonstrate that it is in working order. However, there is no objection to having a second portable receiver as reserve for use in the event of failure of the first receiver provided that the reserve receiver remains in the competitor's vehicle until a failure of the first receiver has occurred. Simultaneous use of two directional receivers will result in disqualification from the contest. The use of any transmitting equipment by the competitor or his team is expressly forbidden, however, mobile phones may be carried for emergency use only. Any aerial connected to a fixed monitoring receiver in a competitor's car must be of a non-directional type.
- (i) The aerial of any hidden transmitter will be directly connected to the transmitter without the use of non-radiating feeders. The transmitter will not be operated by remote control.
- (j) Divulging information or assisting other competitors is forbidden and may lead to disqualification.
- (k) Competitors who qualify for the National Final on a qualifying event who do not wish to compete in the final must notify the ARDF committee before the start of the next event. The next person in line on that event will qualify for the National Final.

9. National Contest Manager

Before the start of any event, the national contest manager shall appoint a person whose main function shall be to ensure that the rules are complied with at the start of the contest.

In the event of any dispute(s) occurring during the contest the competitor may, at his discretion, refer the matter in writing to the chairman of the BTBDFA committee, no later than 14 days after the event. After consideration by the committee its decision will be final.

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