

# Amateur Contact Log Overview (ACL - N3FJP)

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Bob WB4SON - June 12, 2017

# Agenda

- Quick Review of what is out there
- ACL Feature Review
- ACL for Field Day

# Popular “Logging” Programs

- DXKeeper (DXlabs) - Most popular DX hunter logging program
- N1MM+ - Most popular contest logging/control program
- Ham Radio Deluxe (HRD) - Complicated swiss army knife does everything
- Amateur Contact Log (ACL) - Most popular general logging program

MANY more out there. Some free. Some not. The four above are the biggies in their perspective area.

# DXKeeper

- Part of DXLabs Suite (<http://www.dxlabsuite.com>)
- This is THE Logging program for DX Hunters
- Very “DOS” like old feel. Separate programs (nine of them) to do different tasks (like spotting, logging, rig control)
- Author is very responsive to bug fixes, and very active Yahoo group support
- Free

# N1MM+

- <http://www.n1mm.hamdocs.com>
- Most popular contest logger by FAR
- Not really a general purpose logging program
- Full rig control for sending exchanges CW/DATA/even SSB
- Easy to use but fairly complex setup
- Support via Yahoo group. Extensive WIKI with videos
- Free

# Ham Radio Deluxe

- <http://www.ham-radio-deluxe.com>
- Highest level of integration of digital modes, logging, rig control, even satellite
- Complicated to setup and use
- Support via a custom “ticket” system for paid support users. VERY POOR response time. Bugs take years to fix. Support staff often rude.
- \$100 to buy plus \$50 a year for support

# Amateur Contact Log

- <http://www.n3fjp.com>
- Most popular logging ONLY program
- Easiest to setup and use BY FAR
- Can receive frequency/mode info from modern radio
- Supports MANY contests
- Not really intended to for full station control
- Support via email or Yahoo group (never taken more than a few hours for a response via email)
- Costs \$50 for full package, \$25 for ACL, \$9 for individual contests

# Setting up ACL

- Almost any Windows PC will do (very low CPU/GPU requirements)
- Download the contest you want (or the general purpose log)
- Enter your call sign and license key (sent via email)
- Enter your operator information (location, call, operator name/initials)
- Select your radio interface
- Start logging!



# ACL Setup

- Shows on startup or settings/setup choice
- General ACL has Call/Country.../Zone info
- Contest have required data like 2O for WFD  
Or 2A for Field Day
- Enter your Operator Initials at the bottom!

Setup (Ctrl S)

**Common Fields**

Call	W1SYE
Country	USA
Continent	NA
Latitude	41.5
Longitude	West is positive 71.5
CQ Zone	5
ITU Zone	8

**Required for Winter Field Day**

Category	1H, 2I, 3O, etc. 2O
ARRL Section	RI

**Optional**

Operator	W1SYE
Initials	RMB

☒ Always display this form on startup (you can display it from the Settings menu at any time).

Help Done

# Using ACL

- Pretty much everything you need to know is on a single screen
- Just enter info for the other station (call, exchange, contest details, etc.)
- Easy to export to an ADIF file, do Cabrillo Contest files, lotw, eqsl, etc.

■ Current Band & Mode		Find		Recent Contacts							● Last 20    ○ All	
Rec	Call	Cat	Sec	Date / Time		Bnd	Mode	Country	Initials	Operator		
1115	KC1AQQ	1H	RI	01/28 21:59		1.25	PH	USA		N1PSX		
1114	KC1AQQ	1H	RI	01/28 21:57		70	PH	USA		N1PSX		
1113	KC1AQQ	1H	RI	01/28 21:46		2	PH	USA		N1PSX		
1112	N6JNL	1H	SV	01/29 19:00		20	PH	USA		W2DAN		
1111	K4TJF	1H	TN	01/29 18:59		20	PH	USA		W2DAN		
1110	K7PDW	1H	UT	01/29 18:58		20	PH	USA		W2DAN		
1109	KC0HYY	1H	MO	01/29 18:58		20	PH	USA		W2DAN		
1108	KH6MT	1H	NFL	01/29 18:57		20	PH	Hawaii		W2DAN		
1107	AK5CT	1H	MS	01/29 18:53		20	PH	USA		W2DAN		
1106	K1CTB	1O	GA	01/29 18:52		20	PH	USA		W2DAN		
1105	N8NAV	1H	MI	01/29 18:52		20	PH	USA		W2DAN		

Score Statistics	
Total CW Contacts	202
Total Phone Contacts	859
Total DIG Contacts	54
Total Multipliers	18
Total Score	24,678
QSOs / Hr (Last 20 min)	0
QSOs / Hr (Last 60 min)	0

Call

Cat

Section

Ready to begin!

Please select your band and mode from the menu options!

Clear

Spot Last

Possible Duplicates ☒ Any Portion

Rhode Island Total = 22

Bands: 80 = 3 40 = 8 20 = 3 15 = 2 10 = 2 6 = 1 2 = 1

1.25 = 1 70 = 1

CW= 4 PH= 17 DIG= 1

DX		3		5		7		0	
DX		DE MDC		AR NTX		AK NV		CO MO	
1		EPA WPA		LA OK		AZ OR		IA ND	
CT RI		4		MS STX		EWA UT		KS NE	
EMA VT		AL SC		NM WTX		ID WWA		MN SD	
ME WMA		GA SFL		6		MT WY		Canada	
NH		KY TN		EB SCV		8		AB NT	
2		NC VA		LAX SDG		MI WV		BC ONE	
ENY NNY		NFL VI		ORG SF		OH		GTA ONN	
NLI SNJ		PR WCF		PAC SJV		9		MAR ONS	
NNJ WNY				SB SV		IL WI		MB QC	
						IN		NL SK	

# Adding a Contact to the log

- Look for area near left/center
- Add in contact details (call/exchange)
- Frequency/Time/Mode automatic

The screenshot shows the N1MM-Logger software interface. At the top, there's a menu bar with options like File, Settings, Band, Mode, View, Network, Operator, Help. Below this is a 'Recent Contacts' table with columns: Rec, Call, Cat, Sec, Date / Time, Bnd, Mode, Country, Initials, Operator. The table lists several contacts, including 1115 KC1AQO, 1114 KC1AQO, 1113 KC1AQO, 1112 MJJNL, 1111 KJTFJ, 1110 K7PDW, 1109 K0HHY, 1108 K9HBT, 1107 AK5CT, 1106 K1CTB, and 1105 N8NAV. To the right of the table is a 'Score Statistics' panel showing various totals like Total CW Contacts (202), Total Phone Contacts (859), Total DIG Contacts (54), Total Multipliers (18), Total Score (24,678), and QSOs / Hr (Last 20 min) (0). Below the table, there are three buttons: 'Call', 'Cat', and 'Section', which are circled in red. Below these buttons is a large cyan button labeled 'Ready to begin! Please select your band and mode from the menu options!'. At the bottom, there's a 'Possible Duplicates' section showing 'East Washington Bands: 20 = 1 PH= 1'.

1106	K1CTB	10	GA	01/29 18:52
1105	N8NAV	1H	MI	01/29 18:52

  

<b>Call</b>	<b>Cat</b>	<b>Section</b>
WB4SON	1H	RI

# Keeping Track of Progress

- Upper Right Corner of screen dedicated to progress
- Score is good to know but RATES tell story!

Score Statistics	
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QSOs / Hr (Last 20 min)	0
QSOs / Hr (Last 60 min)	0

Recent Contacts									
Rec	Call	Cat	Sec	Date / Time	Brd	Mode	Country	Initials	Operator
1115	KC1AQZ	1H	RI	01/29 21:55	125	PH	USA		N1PDX
1114	KC1AQZ	1H	RI	01/29 21:57	70	PH	USA		N1PDX
1113	KC1AQZ	1H	RI	01/29 21:58	2	PH	USA		N1PDX
1112	NR4L	1H	SV	01/29 19:50	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1111	KATJF	1H	TN	01/29 18:59	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1110	K7PDW	1H	UT	01/29 18:58	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1109	KGBHY	1H	MO	01/29 18:58	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1108	KH8MT	1H	NFL	01/29 18:57	20	PH	Hawaii		W2DAN
1107	AKSCT	1H	MS	01/29 18:53	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1106	K1G7B	1Q	GA	01/29 18:52	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1105	NN4V	1H	ME	01/29 18:52	20	PH	USA		W2DAN

Score Statistics	
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QSOs / Hr (Last 60 min)	0

Call	Cat	Section
WB4SON	1H	RI

Please type a valid category. The first character is the number of transmitters. The second character is the site: Indoor, Outdoor, Home.

Clear Spot List Possible Duplicates Add Filter

DX	3	5	7	0
DE MDC	AR NTX	AK NV	CO MO	
EPA WPA	LA OK	AZ OR	IA ND	
CT RI	MS STX	EWA UT	KS NE	
EMA VT	NM WTX	ID WVA	MN SD	
ME WMA		MT WY	Canada	
NH	AL SC			
	GA SFL			
	NY TN			
	NC VA	EB SCV	MI WV	AB NT
	NFL VI	LAX SDG	OH	BC ONE
ENY NNY	PR WCF	ORG SF		GTA ONS
NLI SNJ		PAC SUJ		MAR MC
NNJ WNY		SB SV	IL WI	NL SK

Beating: 11 Wsep: 23 Band: 1.25 Mode: PH WISYE 20 RI 2:59:32 PM 18:59:32 UTC

# Sections/Multipliers

Some contests keep track of sections  
(Field Day does NOT), but they are  
Listed which helps you get it right

Red highlighted ones are still needed

K0FIP's Winter Field Day Contest Log 1.8 [www.k0fip.com](http://www.k0fip.com)

File Settings Band Mode View Network Operator Help

Current Band & Mode Find Recent Contacts 0 Last 20 All

Rec	Call	Cat	Sec	Date / Time	Bnd Mode	Country	Initials	Operator
1115	KC1AQQ	1H	RI	01/28 21:59	1.25 PH	USA		N1PSX
1114	KC1AQQ	1H	RI	01/28 21:57	70 PH	USA		N1PSX
1113	KC1AQQ	1H	RI	01/28 21:46	2 PH	USA		N1PSX
1112	N6JNL	1H	SV	01/29 19:00	20 PH	USA		W2DAN
1111	K4TJF	1H	TN	01/29 18:59	20 PH	USA		W2DAN
1110	K7PDW	1H	UT	01/29 18:58	20 PH	USA		W2DAN
1109	K0HYY	1H	MO	01/29 18:58	20 PH	USA		W2DAN
1108	KH6MT	1H	NFL	01/29 18:57	20 PH	Hawaii		W2DAN
1107	AK5CT	1H	MS	01/29 18:53	20 PH	USA		W2DAN
1106	K1CTB	1O	GA	01/29 18:52	20 PH	USA		W2DAN
1105	N8NAV	1H	MI	01/29 18:52	20 PH	USA		W2DAN

Score Statistics

Total CW Contacts	202
Total Phone Contacts	859
Total DIG Contacts	54
Total Multipliers	18
Total Score	24,678
QSOs / Hr (Last 20 min)	0
QSOs / Hr (Last 60 min)	0

Call Cat Section

WB4SON 1H RI

Please type a valid category. The first character is the number of transmitters. The second character is the site: Indoor, Outdoor, Home.

Clear Spot Last

Possible Duplicates Any Portion

Rhode Island Total = 22

Bands: 80 = 3 40 = 8 20 = 3 15 = 2 10 = 2 6 = 1 2 = 1

1.25 = 1 70 = 1

CW= 4 PH= 17 DIG= 1

Bearing: 11

Miles: 23

Band: 1.25 Mode: PH

DX 3 5 7 0

DE MDC  
EPA WPA

AR NTX  
LA OK  
MS STX  
NM WTX

AK NV  
AZ OR  
EWA UT  
ID WWA  
MT WY

CO MO  
IA ND  
KS NE  
MN SD

Canada

AB NT  
BC ONE  
GTA ONN  
MAR ONS  
MB QC  
NL SK

CT RI  
EMA VT  
ME WMA  
NH

4

AL SC  
GA SFL  
KY TN  
NC VA  
NFL VI  
PR WCF

2

ENY NNY  
NJ SNJ  
NNJ WNY

6

EB SCV  
LAX SDG  
ORG SF  
PAC SJV  
SB SV

8

MI WV  
OH

9

IL WI  
IN

W1SYE 2O RI

2:43:54 PM  
18:43:54 UTC

- Bottom-left corner of screen
- Enter a part of a callsign and ACL suggests common testers
- In example to right, typing “W1S” in the Call Box pops up a list of 15 calls.
- Sure enough W1SYE is in there!

K1NTP V Winter Field Day Contest Log v3.0      www.k1n.com

Efile Settings Band Mode View Network Operator Help

■ Current Band & Mode

Freq

Rec	Call	Cat	Sec	Date / Time	Bnd	Mode	Country	Initials	Operator
1115	KC1AAQ	1H	RI	01/28 21:59	1.25	PH	USA	N1PSX	
1114	KC1AAQ	1H	RI	01/28 21:57	70	PH	USA	N1PSX	
1113	KC1AAQ	1H	SV	01/28 21:48	20	PH	USA	N1PSX	
1112	W6JNL	1H	SV	01/29 19:00	20	PH	USA	WZDAN	
1111	K4TJF	1H	TN	01/29 18:59	20	PH	USA	WZDAN	
1110	K7PDW	1H	UT	01/29 18:58	20	PH	USA	WZDAN	
1109	KG0HY	1H	MO	01/29 18:58	20	PH	USA	WZDAN	
1108	XV6MT	1H	NFL	01/29 18:57	20	PH	Hawaii	WZDAN	
1107	AKSCT	1H	MS	01/29 18:53	20	PH	USA	WZDAN	
1106	K1CTB	1O	GA	01/29 18:52	20	PH	USA	WZDAN	
1105	N8NAV	1H	MI	01/29 18:52	20	PH	USA	WZDAN	

Score Statistics

Total CW Contacts

202

Total Phone Contacts

859

Total DIG Contacts

54

Total Multipliers

18

Total Score

24,678

QSOs / Hr (Last 20 min)

0

QSOs / Hr (Last 60 min)

0

Call

W1S

Cat

1H

Section

RI

Clear

Spot List

Super Check Partial

Key Rotation

5W1SA 6W1SR 6W1SU EW1SP W1SAM W1SFR  
W1SF5 W1SJ W1SKU W1SMS W1SNE W1SRD W1SSN  
W1SYE W1SZ

Dx

1

CT RI  
EMA VT  
ME WMA  
NH

2

AL SC  
GA SFL  
KY TN  
NC VA  
NFL VI  
PR WCF  
  
ENY NNY  
NLI SNJ  
NNJ WNY

3

DE MDC  
EPA WPA

4

AL SC  
GA SFL  
KY TN  
NC VA  
NFL VI  
PR WCF

5

AR NTX  
LA OK  
MS STX  
NM WTX

6

EB SCV  
LAX SDG  
ORG SF  
PAC SJV  
SB SV

7

AK NV  
AZ OR  
EWA UT  
ID WVA  
MT WY

8

MI WV  
OH

9

IL WI  
IN

0

CO MO  
IA ND  
KS NE  
MN SD

Canada

AB NT  
BC ONE  
GTA ONN  
MBR ONS  
MAR QC  
NL SK

Bearing: 262 Miles: 1,108 Band: 1.25 Mode: PH W1SYE 20 RI 2:48:19 PM 19:48:19 UTC

# Duplicates

- Program will warn of a possible duplicate call sign
- Actual Duplicate big red warning
- Can't enter a duplicate contact

By the way, don't mention it to the Other operator -- Just move on!

The screenshot shows a software interface with three input fields at the top: 'Call', 'Cat', and 'Section'. The 'Call' field contains the text 'W7VN' and is circled in red. Below these fields is a large cyan area with a red oval containing the text 'Possible Duplicate!'. At the bottom, there is a 'Possible Duplicates' section with a checkbox labeled 'Any Portion' which is checked. Below this, the text 'W7VNJ' is displayed and circled in red. There are also 'Clear' and 'Spot Last' buttons above the duplicates list.



# Fixing a Mistake

- So quick and easy to enter a contact
- Fixing a mistake real break of “flow”
- Go to upper-right. Newest at top
- Click on desired entry and click
- Click on Edit box

File Settings Band Mode View Network Operator Help						
Current Band & Mode		Find				
Rec	Call	Cat	Sec	Date / Time	Bnd	
1106	K1CTB	1O	GA	01/29 18:52	20	
1105	N8NAV	1H	MI	01/29 18:52	20	
1104	KM4JZJ	1H	KY	01/29 18:49	20	
1103	KD0HRM	1H	MN	01/29 18:47	20	
1102	N7SMT	1H	WVWA	01/29 18:45	20	
1101	W7VNJ	1O		43	20	
1100	VA6AN	1O		43	20	
1099	KE7MSU	1O	OR	01/29 18:42	20	
1098	N2GRS	1H	NFL	01/29 18:42	20	

www.n3jg.com

File Settings Band Mode View Network Operator Help

Current Band & Mode Find

Recent Contacts

Rec	Call	Cat	Sec	Date / Time	Bnd	Mode	Country	Initials	Operator
1106	K1CTB	1O	GA	01/29 18:52	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1105	N8NAV	1H	MI	01/29 18:52	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1104	KM4JZJ	1H	KY	01/29 18:49	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1103	KD0HRM	1H	MN	01/29 18:47	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1102	N7SMT	1H	WVWA	01/29 18:45	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1101	W7VNJ	1O		43	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1100	VA6AN	1O		43	20	PH	Canada		W2DAN
1099	KE7MSU	1O	OR	01/29 18:42	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1098	N2GRS	1H	NFL	01/29 18:42	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1097	N0FY	1H	MO	01/29 18:41	20	PH	USA		W2DAN
1096	WB2AKH	1H	NFL	01/29 18:40	20	PH	USA		W2DAN

Score Statistics

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QSOs / Hr (Last 60 min)	0

Call Cat Section

W1S 1H RI

DX

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

0

Canada

Super Check Partial

SW1SA 6W1SR 6W1SU EW1SP W1SAM W1SFR W1SFS W1SJ W1SKU W1SMS W1SNE W1SRD W1SSN W1SYE W1SZ

Bearing: 262 Miles: 1,108 Band: 1.25 Mode: PH

W1SYE 20 RI

2:54:00 PM 18:54:00 UTC

# Suggestions

- Download ACL for Field Day -- its free
- <http://www.n3fjp.com>
- Try the software out to get used to it.
- See if you can tie it to your rig (most modern post 1990 rigs supported)
- Avoid USB interface cables with non-FTDI chips!