



ZERO BEAT

<http://hcra.org>

June 2020 Field Day Special

*Field Day is June 27-28
HCRA will NOT be hosting a
club event due to Coronavirus
restrictions*

Field Day 2020 Special edition—Operating Options

- [Visit the HCRA facebook page.](#)
- Don't forget to check out hcra.org
- [Visit Summits on the Air](#)
- [Visit POTA413 facebook page](#)

Hello fellow HCRA members, and Hams

This year has presented all of us with challenges—Covid19 has disrupted work, public events, our meetings and families. Needless to say, Field Day, our largest activity, has many challenges also.

I hope that we can provide some information that will help all of us to have our own successful Field Day—however we choose to do it. I look at it as an opportunity to utilize the many options in the rules, and the many ways that we can get on the air to make a bunch of contacts, and test myself and my gear.

I plan to operate as a 1E station—solo operator, battery power, with partial solar charging (100 pt bonus) in my yard. There are many ways to setup a Field Day station and participate. Please read through our information, and look at what you CAN do rather than what you CAN'T do

73, John Ewell N1JIE

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Win a IC-7300

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**Drawing to be held at
the MTARA HamFest
March 2021 or when
all tickets are sold.**



FROM THE SHACK

Special Field Day 2020 Mini ZeroBeat



When June arrives every year, we all start thinking about Field Day. At least I do. Much more deeply than prior months knowing it's just a few weeks away.

I still remember my very first Field Day as a novice way back when I was just 14 years old. My parents dropped me off Friday afternoon after school with my tent and stuff saying they'd pick me up Sunday afternoon.

I remember helping to string dipoles along the lower and upper area of Minnechaug Mountain in Ludlow with the now defunct Provin Mountain Radio Association. I remember that SSB was at the top and cw was down below. That's where I was. Stand-

ing in a Boilard Lumber box truck watching experienced hams make contacts in cw while another person besides them also copies the cw and logs (on paper) and runs those (horrible manual) dupe sheets also on paper. I hated those things.

After a few hours; the older ops started nudging me to operate. I was fine just watching and listening and helping to copy the cw. Soon enough, Chick Boilard; WA1VCU, who taught and administered my novice test told me my cw copying and sending was very good and it's time for me to operate. I shook my head no, but he and another ham sort of pushed me into the seat, put the other headphones on my head, sat next to me to log and coach.

I listened for a bit and they said go. I sent the call we were using and was replied to immediately and I froze. What to do? Another nudge, pointing to the sheet in front of me saying answer him. I did. I repeated that a few times and the next thing I knew I was there for hours operating and having a blast. The loggers beside me changed, food and drink was brought to me and I kept on operating.

I don't remember how long, but I was supercharged when I finally let someone else operate. All too soon it ended and we took down the antennas. My parents picked me up and home I went. For the next few days, I heard cw everywhere in my head.

That was my first Field Day. I did quite a few more with them and eventually moved on to other, larger clubs, doing a few by myself with friends and eventually landing with the HCRA around 20+ years ago. I had been a member since my teens but had never done Field Day with the HCRA. I do remember the slide shows of Field Day set up between the goal posts at the Agawam High School football field.

Around eight to ten years ago, my son took a summer job in the Adirondacks as a camp counselor at the Massawepie Boy Scout reservation. He had to be there the Saturday of Field Day. So I conceded and said I wouldn't participate in Field Day. But as the trip and time got closer, I changed my mind. We were camping for a week in Lake Placid and I figured there had to be a club nearby I could go and operate from for a little while. Well, the nearest club was 50 miles away in Long Lake. We took the drive and I was the only cw op and operated as a guest with the Bear Bait Radio Club for a few hours. Even while mobile on the way there, I operated a few stations on SSB with W1AW being one of them. That was made north of Tupper Lake on the main road in the Western 'Dacks.

FROM THE SHACK (CONT'D)

Special Field Day 2020 Mini ZeroBeat

We got Jacob to camp fine and the following year he worked there also. That year we camped in Long Lake and at the Bear Bait Field Day site. Leaving mid day to take him to camp and then return to operate more.

Fast forward to the present. June first, all those Field Day memories of the past come flooding back to me. It happens every year. My wife (Faye) sees it and knows nothing gets in my way to participate, even if for a few hours somehow.

But, an extremely different year is upon us. Field Day has been in our thoughts since January or February but June first again it became top priority. But this year is very different. COVID-19 has disrupted everything in every way including Field Day this year.

I spent a few sleepless nights trying to figure out how to make it work. I just could not see it coming together. I spoke to a few of the top participants and explained the situation. While they were disappointed, they understood. So I announced it to the club. The 2020 HCRA Field Day was canceled. No group outing playing radio this year.

Everyone is going to operate their own stations in their own way. This year, just like in the 10m contest each December, we can aggregate the scores from each of your stations to credit the HCRA as a club.

This way the HCRA can still have a presence in the Field Day scores as well as having your own score listed. This mini issue of ZeroBeat is dedicated to explaining how you can run your own Field Day station. You will learn:

What logging programs you can use

What category to use

How to credit the HCRA

When to submit our log (very important!)

more useful info

Just some info to get you started and erase those unsure issues that you may be thinking about.

I do hope to hear you on the air. I will be running both SSB and CW from my home station. I don't have a generator, so electricity it is. Faye and I will be wearing our 2020 field Day t-shirts (we've had them for months now) just like we do every year.

For you, jot your notes and stories down to share with us all in a future ZeroBeat next fall. Your experiences & story are worth telling, even if short. John, N1JIE, the ZeroBeat editor will have his email elsewhere in this issue. Send him your experiences and comment. Even if short.

73 and have a great summer!

Larry, W1AST - Your HCRA President



FD2020 – Different things for Different Times

I suggest first thing, you download the full ARRL Field Day packet [2020 Field Day Packet](#) from the ARRL FD2020 page. There is a LOT of info there, that many hams don't look at because, in a club operating setting, "somebody" takes care of that. This year, with HCRA NOT doing an operating site – it will be up to you to understand the rules of the contest. And that too, is an opportunity to really get into it. I strongly advise actually printing at least the rules section, if not the whole package. Read them, highlight things that may apply to your station. Look over all the bonus points, and make sure you can meet the requirements to get as many as you can.

How are you going to operate? By yourself? At home? Commercial power? Battery / generator / solar? Lots of options, lots of chances to test yourself and your equipment. Still time to make some changes. Bottom line – If you are truly portable (not in your yard, but more like a POTA / SOTA setup – away) then it's Class A or B. If you are at home, even if you aren't using your home rig or antenna, it's class D or E. If you are mobile (able to operate while moving) then it's class C

Class A – 3 or more persons, portable, setup specifically for FD, operating together under 1 call. Number of simultaneous transmitters 1-20.

Class B – 1 or 2 persons, portable, otherwise same as Class A. A couple of ways to go with this, but basically you are NOT at home, but "in the field" like an emergency, apocalypse, zombies, District 13. Yeah, Like that.

Class C – mobile. In a truck, in a plane, on a boat, on a train.... The rig is setup in a vehicle and can operate from the vehicle while moving. Just having the transmitter in a vehicle, with a separate stationary antenna isn't mobile, it's portable.

Class D – In your home shack, on commercial power, just like every day. Easy-Peasy

Class E – Home station, or portable in your back yard, or any experiment you want to do at home, but NOT on commercial power.

This year, all participants can take credit for contacts with all other stations. This allows Class D stations to credit contact with other Class D stations. I expect that there will be a lot of Class D stations.

So – what's the difference? Well, its so the scores kinda compare apples to apples in performance. Kinda. We all know that a field setup with a jack up tower and a tribander will outperform a buddipole on a tripod. Even though both can be 1B stations... But, it's NOT a contest – it's a way for all of us to learn how to operate outside the box. So don't limit yourself to the "best" setup – try for an emergency or unusual setup for you. It'll teach ya sumthin

New licensees, even Technician can participate. There is 10M SSB, the VHF/UHF and if you know CW, lots on HF. Even if all you have is an HT, there will be people on 2M and 70cm – make a few contacts. Hike out somewhere high, and you would qualify for Class B and 5W or less (multiplier of 5), but repeater contacts don't count. You will be surprised what you can do. We have a couple of members that plan to fly around local in a plane out of Northampton Airport, and they will be monitoring 146.520, that would be cool. I will also be on 520, as my portable rig includes VHF and I have a small j-pole I can hang. I get lousy coverage on 2M as I live under Mt Tom, but – contact with a pilot?? Yup, I'm listening.



Logging: This is important. Whether you are comfortable with electronic logs or paper logs, following the logging rules will keep your entry smooth, and your points maximum. ARRL lists several electronic logs, most common seems to be N1MM and N3FJP. Both are written by hams (I had a qso with N3FJP in the latest 10M contest, nice guy) and produce a clean file for submitting online to the ARRL. If electronic logging is new to you, practice in advance. Paper logs are provided in the ARRL package, along with clear directions. Look the them over well in advance, and highlight the parts that get you points.

I'm going to try 1E, Battery / solar. Setup in my yard, end fed with 84' wire on a 30' pole and the 2M j-pole hung from a pole stuck in a tree. I've tested the EF, and made several dx contacts. It's not as quiet or efficient as my permanent dipole, but it works, and I hope to make at least 1 contact on all HF bands. It's setup completely separate from the home station. Harold N1FTP is going "away" to operate a 1B station. Similar equipment, but different type location. I might visit...

Now, last month, Harold and I put together a bit of a primer for setting up on your own. A couple of "rules" things to keep in mind:

- Ensure your setup meets the rules for your class – some examples of things that could trip you up;
 - When to start your setup (Class A or B) – if you plan to do an all-nighter, don't start your setup before the time allowed. Setup time is specific with limits on operating time if started early.
 - Class B – no permanent structures.
 - A laptop may be on commercial power for logging, but you will lose credit for battery / solar if used that way for FT8 / digital.
- List **Hampden County Radio Association** (no abbreviations) as your club affiliation in your log. All properly listed club member QSOs will get added to the club total.
- Use the proper exchange – For US and Canada stations – Call Sign FD operating class, and ARRL / RAC section. That's it. So if you are operating from your home rig, commercial power – your exchange would be callsign (e.g. KC1JRB 1D WMA). They will reply with theirs (e.g. W9FD 1B IL). Dx stations will respond with operating class and their country, you record as Dx. Keep a copy of the section abbreviation list handy, it'll help in poor conditions.
- Keep the contacts quick. It's nice to learn more about a contact and chat, but there will be a LOT more operators on at the same time this year, so be polite, keep to the exchange, and move on. Remember to follow the object for FD2020 – To work as many stations as possible on the 160, 80, 40, 20, 15 and 10 Meter HF bands, as well as all bands 50 MHz and above, and in doing so to learn to operate in abnormal situations in less than optimal conditions.
- Listen and record the W1AW bulletin. It's worth 100 pts. Schedule and frequencies are in the package.

Have fun. If you have questions about your particular setup – reach out to another ham. The Board contact list is in ZB, with email addresses. Ask on the 10M or 2M nets in the next week or so.

73,

John N1JIE and Harold N1FTP

Local happenings

Local happenings / Nets

Sundays: 0845: Western Mass Emergency Net 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

First Monday: Southwick Regional RACES Drill, 1845, 146.49 Simplex

Mondays: 1930: HCRA 10m Net 28.375

Tuesdays: 1930-2000: 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R - Hampshire County Emergency Net

Wednesdays: 1930: MTARA Info net 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R - includes NTS Net

2000: MTARA Swap net: 146.94, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

2000: MTARA Simplex Net - starts on 146.94 - PL 127.3, then goes to 146.42 direct (simplex) Usually starts immediately following the swap net.

Thursdays: 1930: HCRA New Ham Net 146.715, PL100—W1BR repeater, Holyoke. A friendly net with HCRA members and newer hams practicing net communications.

2100: Weather Net (Roger, K1PAI Net Control), 1st Thursday of every month: 147.090 MHz, All other Thursdays: 147.000, PL 127.3 - W1TOM/R

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<http://www.arrl.org/membership>

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Club meetings & VE sessions

Please contact site / organization to ensure it will meet.

1st Friday of the month 7:30 PM, HCRA Club Meeting, Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech St. Holyoke MA 01040 (no meetings held in July or August.) <http://www.hcra.org/meeting-location/>

3rd Friday of the month 7:30 PM, MTARA Club meeting, Red Cross building, [150 Brookdale Dr. Springfield, Mass.](#) (no meetings held in July or August)

4th Friday of the month 6:00 PM, Technician, General, and Extra Class License Exams, Holyoke Hospital Auxiliary Conference Center, 575 Beech Street, Holyoke, Mass. Hosted by the Western Mass VE Team (WMVET). Contact: David Cote, w1fab@arrl.net

Second Monday of the month 7:00 PM, Franklin County Amateur Radio Club meeting, Greenfield Community College, East Bldg. Rm 110 (no meetings held in July, August, December—check website) <http://www.fcarc.org/>

4th Monday of February, May, August, November 7:00 PM, FCARC VE Exams, <http://www.fcarc.org/>



**Here is your exciting copy
of Zero Beat!**

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