



New Contest for Dxers and Portable Operators
*Portable Ops Challenge Pits Home and Portable Ops
against each other*

Ridgeland, Mississippi— August 10, 2020 — A new contest has been announced that will level the competitive playing field between the Big Guns and the Little Pistols who operate a portable station. It's called the *Fox Mike Hotel Portable Operations Challenge*. "The scoring metric is the distance-per-power metric with multipliers for portable operators and the difficulty of the transmission mode," said Ed Durrant DD5LP, a member of the Steering Committee for the POC. "We are using *kilometres-per-watt* as the score for a contact. But those using a more difficult transmission mode such as phone will get a higher multiplier than those using the more efficient modes of CW and digital. Being a portable station will receive an additional multiplier, especially when contacting another portable station." The scoring system is based upon the golf metaphor of the handicap index used to equalize the opportunity for all players to win when they have unequal ability and play on courses with varying levels of difficulty.

The POC is being sponsored by ARRL's *National Contesting Journal*, the UK DX Foundation (CDXC), the Hellenic Amateur Radio Association of Australia and the South African Amateur Radio League. *NCJ* Editor, Dr. Scott Wright KOMD, said, "*NCJ* is very pleased to be an official sponsor of this contest event. It will encourage activity by operators who are "limited by real-estate," and do not have a full-blown contest station. Events like this stimulate more interest in contesting and it will have an international scope to give chances to snare some new DXCC entities." Don Field G3XTT, Editor of *Practical Wireless* magazine and highly experienced DX contester who is President of the UK DX Foundation, added "This is an exciting new contest event. I'm happy to serve on the Steering Committee and help in any way I can!" A highly competitive contest operator from Australia, Tommy Horozakis VK2IR, was very enthusiastic to join the Steering Committee to help plan the POC: "I'm really excited to be part of the team and can't wait to get started." Tommy VK2IR added that the Hellenic Amateur Radio Association of Australia was pleased to be an award plaque sponsor for the event.

The *Portable Ops Challenge* is the brainchild of Frank Howell K4FMH who says his portable ops team was the inspiration. "I hear many operators who get outdoors and try to dip their hands in a conventional contest saying two things. They enjoyed the competition. And it's a shame that the Big Guns dominate the realistic chances of winning. That's simply the way it is in the vast majority of contests but it made my portable ops team think: is there a way to level the playing field? I think the Steering Committee consisting of both veteran DX contest participants and some of the best portable operators in the world has come up with something worth giving a go," Frank K4FMH said. "I'd say the question is, whether the Big

Guns can win using the handicap system that the Steering Committee has produced. With this scoring metric, it's more about radio sport than radio gear. But we won't know until many of the Big Guns enter the Portable Ops Challenge. We are building it but will the Big Guns come?" Only time will tell but the first POC is nearing it's inaugural launch.

Scheduled for October 3 and 4, 2020, the POC's rules and other relevant documents are located at foxmikehotel.com/challenge.

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For more information on the Portable Operations Challenge:

<https://foxmikehotel.com/challenge>

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