



PVRC Newsletter

January 2025

Newsletter Editor: John K3TN jpescatore@aol.com

Website: <http://www.pvrc.org>

Meeting Info: <http://www.pvrc.org/chapters.htm>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PotomacValleyRadioClub/>

President's Letter – Doug AA3S

I very much hope that all of you are recovered from a rewarding holiday season and are looking forward to more radio contesting in 2025! There is lots of it, for sure. Several 5M contests this month, but more on that later...

Competition against other radio clubs is a major reason for PVRC to exist. PVRC has been at the top of the heap in winning major club competitions and the competition is getting fierce as other clubs take aim at us. The good news from increased activity from all clubs is that amateur radio in general benefits from the increased use of the bands and honing our technical & communication skills.

The bad news is that the other clubs don't want us to win so many contests; they'd rather see us win none.

One approach for us is to 'work smarter' and not just more time in front of the radio during a contest. A lot of wisdom about how to work smarter has been captured for your use in the various Sweepstakes presentations available on our website (for public viewing).

How about expanding the wisdom to include other contests. For example, the recent ARRL 10 meter contest that we did well in, but I can't help but feel that many of us left 'points on the table' (and not in our logs) because we did not use both CW and SSB to get more multipliers. I'm talking mostly about techniques to benefit the part-time contesteer and/or the Search & Pouncer who may benefit most by working smarter (since running successfully for the entire contest is going to get the multipliers, etc). I know that I can't always get traction when trying to run so it's not simply a matter of giving up S&P in favor of running. It certainly can be a lot of fun getting a successful run, it just can't always happen. So then what is the best strategy for that particular contest? Many of us would like a reference for that information on a contest-specific basis.

There are many PVRC members who regularly score very high in many of the 5M contests, and those operators are a natural place to start for ideas. Can you start the conversation of smart contesting techniques on our Reflector and gather the results into contest-specific groups for an informal document outline (not a finished presentation unless you want to take it that far).

Not all tactics ideas will be applicable to all operators: an op who chooses to try to win the single-band category of a multi-band contest won't need to consider using the band-change minimum time tool in N1MM+ logger, for example. Having a list of ideas unique to each contest should help each of us prepare for and perform better in the contest we choose to be in and for the time we have to devote to it.

So just start the discussion on our Reflector and see where it goes...

PVRC Officers:		Trustees:
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<p>Newsletter Editor: John K3TN jpecatore@aol.com PVRC Website: http://www.pvrc.org PVRC Meeting Info: http://www.pvrc.org/chapters.htm PVRC on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/PotomacValleyRadioClub/</p>		

Club Competition Update – Doug AA3S

In the 2024 WW DIGI club competition, PVRC was 0.17% behind the winner YCCC! Seems like we ought to be able to win this in 2025 with a few more log entries. August 30, 2025 for your calendar.

January 2025 has five 5M contests! Something for everyone: SSB, RTTY, CW, 160 meters, VHF... three of these contests have no circle!

<u>ARRL RTTY Round Up</u>	ARRL/CQ 250-Mile Circle	2025-01-04	2025-01-05	
<u>NA QSO Party - January CW</u>	PVRC Members Worldwide	2025-01-11	2025-01-12	Online Scoreboard
<u>NA QSO Party - January SSB</u>	PVRC Members Worldwide	2025-01-18	2025-01-19	Online Scoreboard
<u>ARRL January VHF</u>	ARRL/CQ 250-Mile Circle	2025-01-18	2025-01-20	
<u>CQ160 CW</u>	PVRC Members Worldwide	2025-01-24	2025-01-26	

The first state QSO Party appears to be Vermont beginning January 31 local time. But the sponsors do not publish out of state club results so this contest is not a club competition in that sense. This contest does count in the overall State QSO Party (SQP) challenge. The SQP Club Challenge leaderboard is found at <https://stateqsoparty.com> From mid-November 2024 data it looks like PVRC will finish 2024 at second or third place with the Minnesota Wireless Association comfortably at the top.

The first State QSO Party with a club competition (i.e. publishes out of state club results) appears to be Virginia in March. Previously, PVRC upset the long-time incumbent in that contest. Repeat?

Be radio-active!

Save the Date: PVRC Galactic Lunch February 1st – Jerome K8LF

The PVRC chapter wide yearly event with President & Treasurer comments and guest speakers. We have two great main presentations:

- **WRTC 2026 - Mark M0DXR Chairman WRTC UK**
- **Next Gen contest voice - N3QE**

Zoom invite will be sent via the PVRC reflector and will be repeated again closer to the event on Feb 3rd.

Thanks for Support From PVRCers—Jack W3KX, W3 QSL Buro Manager



ARRL Third Call Area Incoming QSL Bureau

Sponsored by the National Capitol DX Association (NCDXA)

From the Desk of Jack J. Ference, W3KX, Manager

--December 20, 2024

Subj: Thank you PVRC!

I am writing this letter to thank all the PVRC members who stepped up and made donations to the W3 Incoming QSL Bureau fundraising event over the past few months.

The impact of your support was nothing short of HUGE!

One-third of the donors were PVRC members, contributing a whopping 45% of donations received. Your strong support was critical to the success of this fundraising campaign.

I truly cannot thank you enough for your generosity and support. Your donations literally helped "pull the Bureau out of the fire".

Because of donors like you, the Bureau now has the financial support and stability needed to continue its operations through 2025 and the foreseeable future.

A Donor Recognition Page and how to donate can be found at:
<https://www.ncdxa.org/donate.shtml>.

Once again, I thank you all for your generosity and support.

73,


Jack J. Ference W3KX, Manager
ARRL Third Call Area Incoming QSL Bureau
Email: w3kx@arrl.net

V47T M2 In CQ WW DX SSB – Ken K4ZW

Last summer, I was kicking around ideas of what to do for the fall contest season, beginning for me with CQWW DX SSB. Operating from home is always an option but Single Operator All Band (SOAB) for 40-plus hours is hard. Mentoring the group at ET3AA had a certain appeal. At about this time, Andy Blank, N2NT, asked if I would be interested in joining a Multi-Two (M/2) at V47T with K5ZD, KM3T, and him. I jumped on that, having never done a contest from the Caribbean before. The team he was assembling was hard to beat, too.

V47T is the legacy station of Alex Aimette, W2OX/V47KP (SK), and Joe Brue, K3NM, and is located on an 1100-foot hill overlooking the ocean on three sides. Antennas include:

- 160 meters: Inv L and/or dipole @ 60 ft, Beverages
- 80 meters: 3/4 wave OCF @ 70 ft, Beverages
- 40 meters: 402CD @ 60 ft
- 20 meters: 4-el fixed NE @ 40 ft, 4-el fixed NW @ 50 ft, Skyhawk
- 15 meters: 5-el fixed NE @ 45 ft, 5-el fixed NW @ 55 ft, Skyhawk
- 10 meters: 5-el fixed NE @ 40 ft, 5-el rotatable @ 68 ft, Skyhawk
- C3 tri-bander fixed south

Andy had managed that station for years, so he knew what needed to be done the week leading up to the contest and how to best maximize our effort for the weekend. I was happy to follow his lead. N2NT and K5ZD flew to St. Kitts on Saturday. I came down Sunday and KM3T arrived on Tuesday. The week leading up to the contest was spent fixing antennas, inside automation, and a trip to the telecommunications office to pick up/renew licenses. I obtained V4/K4ZW. A V47## call can be obtained after your third visit.

A four-element 20 fixed on Europe seemed to have a feed problem. The SWR was always a bit high, requiring the use of a tuner. We brought the antenna down and replaced the feed with a new hairpin from DX Engineering. We then pulled it up to about 20 feet and checked it with an analyzer. It looked pretty good, so we installed it back on the tower at 40 feet. As Murphy's Law would have it, the SWR was bad once it was back in place. Things were complicated by the fact that you couldn't reach the match from the tower.



Beam level view of the ocean from V47T.

Several of us suspected it was interacting with the 15-meter beam or the lowband wires around it. The next morning, Andy went up the tower, rotated it towards Europe and bang, it looked good again. It was an interaction problem. We left that one aimed at Europe and swung the other 4-element 20 from Europe to the US, basically swapping the two antennas. I understand this had been a problem for a few years, so it felt good to finally solve that puzzle. I took apart the driven elements of a Skyhawk tri-bander to clean up corrosion. In the process of doing that, I noticed the bracket that connects to one side of the balun was severely corroded and ready to break. That was likely the cause of the intermittent problems Andy said they had been having problems with it. The short strap was replaced with a stiff piece of wire and lugs.



Each day we arrived at the station around 8 AM, leaving the hill when it got dark at 6. N2NT and K5ZD did climbing. Andy also swapped out a rotator. This is the first time I've been to the Caribbean when I didn't hit the beach or even the swimming pool at the apartment where we stayed. It was 100% ham radio. By Friday, the station was ready to go so we had a relaxed day.

(L - In case you wondered why we call them "shacks")

The contest started with K5ZD on 20 meters and me on 15. Throughout the weekend, rates were limited only by the volume of callers and the behavior of the pileup. A benefit of operating outside the US is access to the phone sub-bands below 14150, 21200, 7125, etc. Plus, there we could concentrate on 3-point QSOs. But the number of US hams calling us down there, most likely clicking on a spot without noting the frequency, was disappointing. When we said something, many seemed oblivious to what they had done. Pay attention, please!



K5ZD (L) and K4ZW (R) manning the K3s.

There was no set operator schedule. Each person operated until they wanted a break. Most stints lasted 2-3 hours. I did one 8-hour period as the others were sleeping. Being accustomed to being a single operator, any break was better than what I usually get. Having a team of four seasoned ops meant you were left on your own to make decisions about when to change bands, etc. Prior to the contest, there had been a discussion about running back to town for a shower and nap at the apartment since there is only one bed at the station and few creature comforts, including no bathroom. But that fell by the wayside, and we stayed up there for the full 48 hours.

Claimed scores are as follows:

CALL	QSO's	ZONES	COUNTRIES	SCORE
CR3DX	15,722	169	670	39,439,712
P33W	15,406	173	697	39,004,710
V47T	15,628	175	622	31,340,431



Our only real goal was 16,000 QSOs. We knew we were at a disadvantage score-wise with CR3DX and P44W due to their geographic location to 3-point QSOs. Our setup was simple for M/2. There were basically two stations running, with short breaks to grab multipliers when the rate dropped to a point where it made sense.

L-R, the team after the contest: K5ZD, K4ZW, N2NT, KM3T.

Tyler K3MM Awarded 200M Endorsement – Ted WA3AER

At the 17 December 2024 Northwest Chapter meeting, TK3MM was awarded the 200M endorsement sticker for his achievements in the PVRC 5M program. Ty operates all modes and bands and is very radio-active every week. His 200M 5M endorsement is a tribute to his operating acumen. Congratulations, Ty!



Left to right: Ted, WA3AER and Ty, K3MM

Steve N2FT New Northern VA Chapter Chair – Dick N4RA and Rick N1RM

Back in 2018 during the reign of K3AJ, Tom asked Dick, N4RA to try to resurrect the PVRC VA Metro chapter. The first meeting in Annandale was attended by exactly Dick and Tom. Oops. Next try was in Fairfax which was thought to be closer to the chapter's center of gravity. There were many months of 2,3 or 4 attendees. There was a high-water mark in early-2020 with an overflow meeting, but then things went south - COVID.

Fast forward: meetings recently have seen a reliable group of northern Virginia PVRicers plus many visitors from Maryland and neighboring chapters. The chapter now meets at Lazy Dog restaurant in Fair Oaks mall on the 2nd Tuesdays. Attendance has been stable at 10-12 PVRicers and guests.

A new Chapter Chair!

The news here is that Dick has recently announced his retirement as chapter chair. After asking for volunteers, a rather new PVRicer stepped forward. Enter Steve Johnson, N2FT. Steve joined PVRC in 2023 at a VA Metro meeting. He also regularly attends Blue Ridge and has recently been spotted at the NW meeting. Steve has taken to contesting with a vengeance. He runs high power on a small neighborhood lot and has experimented with many wire antennas. One of his inventions includes a tree ignition option.

Steve was first licensed at age 15 in 1970 as WN2LFD in New Jersey. In 1976, Steve earned his extra and became N2FT. Steve enjoys contesting (particularly CW), but due to his antenna situation is often relegated to search and pounce. He currently operates an ICOM 7610 and OMPower HF2500A to an inverted Vee at 30 feet or a tree-mounted 40/80 vertical and tri-band verticals (20-15-10) configured in a two-element parasitic array. Steve has a lifelong dream of having a rotatable beam so he can currently rotate his two-element parasitic vertical array using the Armstrong method.

Dick and Steve will share the December meeting responsibilities with Steve taking over for the January meeting. Steve's appointment has been vetted and approved by the current club officers. Thanks to Dick for his service!

Steve has proven himself to be a talented and dedicated member of PVRC. If there were a "QSOs per square foot" award he would always be at or near the top. He must deploy his home-brew small-lot antennas at the start of every contest to avoid HOA entanglements and still has enough energy for maximum BIC time to roll up great scores. His drive and expertise are inspirational.

One of the great things about Steve is that he's not one of those guys whose eyes glaze over when someone asks for help. He has been a key contributor to the Blue Ridge Chapter field day efforts, providing food as well as hundreds of Qs. His acceptance of the role of Chair of the Virginia Metro Chapter is another example of Steve's giving back to the community.

Congratulations and thanks, Steve!



The "PVRC Swarm" – John K3TN

As of this writing, 123 PVRC posted to 3830scores.com

Here's a graphic I put together for a webinar with the NC chapter about Sweepstakes. Notice how close the average scores across clubs are but the patented PVRC swarm is our equivalent of the Philadelphia Eagles "Tush Push/Brotherly Shove"!

Swarm, PVRC, Swarm!

Affiliated Club Competition

Club	Score	Entries
Unlimited		
Potomac Valley Radio Club	11,934,598	191
Society of Midwest Contesters	7,184,322	114
Minnesota Wireless Assn.	5,257,720	106
Yankee Clipper Contest Club	5,242,304	84
Frankford Radio Club	4,573,072	92
Florida Contest Group	3,261,300	53

PVRC Average Score - 62,491
 SMC Average Score - 63,013
 YCCC Average Score - 62,405
 FRC Average Score - 49,700

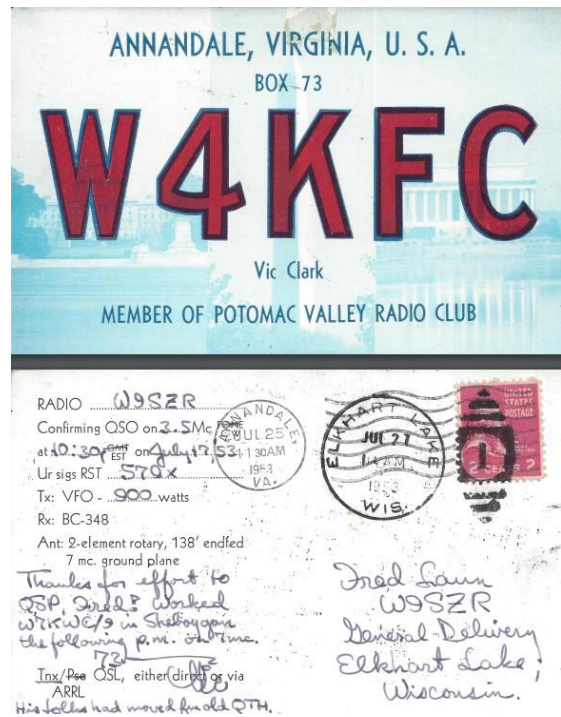


QSO Between Giants – Dave K3ZJ via the PVRC Reflector

In response to Pat K000 noting the anniversary of Vic Clark's passing, Dave K3ZJ wrote: Vic truly was one-of-a-kind. He informed me that he himself was a native Cape Codder when I put up a modest station on Cape Cod in 1982, but that his family moved to Arizona when he was very young. Nevertheless, he was born with the salt air in his lungs and frequently asked about Cape Cod even though he grew up in the desert town of Phoenix.

A little-known connection: Fred K3ZO once wrote that got the idea of becoming a ham himself after reading an article in Boy's Life (the Boy Scout magazine) that focused on Vic's ham radio activity. Not too long later Fred was on the air and QSOed Vic, and always kept Vic's QSL card in a special place (copy attached).

Vic was not in the 1983 CQWW CW. Unfortunately, he was stricken earlier the day that the contest commenced here on the East Coast, Nov. 25, 1983.



PVRC DXCC and Marathon Standings – Frank W3LPL

Below are the DXCC Challenge and DX Marathon Challenge totals for PVRC members, transcribed from the ARRL [DXCC data](#) and DX Marathon inputs as of the 20th of each month or so. Thanks to Frank for the data each month to make this a regular feature. Please report any omissions or errors to [Frank](#).

CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC
W4DR	3204	K3JT	2560	W3FOX	2002	W8AKS	1519
W3UR	3187	W3BW	2554	W0YVA	2001	K4HQB	1518
W3LPL	3173	W3OA	2550	K5RJ	1961	KU1T	1501
K4CIA	3143	WA2BCK	2523	K3STX	1929	N3AIU	1487
N2QT	3106	W4VIC	2509	N3KS	1906	N1EK	1467
N4BAA	3048	W2GG	2493	K4EU	1871	WA3EKL	1465
W4PK	3038	N3RC	2491	N3ND	1867	N3HBX	1428
W3DF	3000	N4GG	2426	N3OC	1836	N8II	1390
K4SO	2995	W2YE	2334	W2CDO	1835	NR4M	1382
N4MM	2987	K0GD	2324	K3AJ	1818	N5HC	1379
K1HTV	2982	K1ZZI	2314	W3KB	1815	W4PRO	1377
WX4G	2973	K3TN	2305	W3DM	1791	W9GE	1364
N3NT	2966	W3YY	2297	KE4S	1758	AK3E	1348
W3LL	2965	K4WNW	2278	W3US	1750	KG4USN	1337
K5EK	2949	KA4RRU	2256	K1RH	1743	W3NRJ	1325
W3KX	2943	W3IP	2254	N3MK	1738	N1SZ	1317
W0VTT	2942	N4JQQ	2238	N4GU	1738	K4ZA	1313
K1AR	2919	NW4V	2219	K4QE	1727	K5VG	1234
KG7H	2896	W3MR	2217	N4XYZ	1720	K4NTO	1222
AB3CV	2889	K4FJ	2214	ND3F	1718	N3RR	1199
K3WC	2889	KM3V	2206	W4GP	1710	W4NF	1181
N4DB	2857	K1EFI	2190	KF7NN	1698	N6DW	1137
KG4W	2854	N4ZH	2188	W3UL	1679	N1RM	1136
K3WA	2841	K2BA	2153	NE3H	1668	KK4ODQ	1099
K1GG	2713	N3QE	2147	K3WI	1652	K3IXD	1090
K3RA	2708	W3TN	2132	N4ZR	1652	NE3K	1073
K5RT	2706	K3PU	2107	WB4DNL	1620	W3ZQI	1066
WB3AVN	2698	K3SX	2105	AA4FU	1608	N3COB	1049
N3MN	2657	KN4KL	2079	K3KY	1606	W4ZV	1048
N4TL	2638	W3GG	2071	KE3X	1588	K4ZW	1044
W4FQT	2622	N4NW	2068	NA1DX	1579	K4VX	1021
K5VIP	2611	N3KN	2066	W3OU	1568		
N3KK	2575	AA4NC	2061	N3AO	1527		
N4QQ	2565	W3XY	2056	WB2ZAB	1522		

DX Marathon Challenge Standings

CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC
W3LPL	1849	N1EK	1292	W2GG	1101	KG4USN	676
K3MM	1847	K6ND	1245	W4VIC	1079	N6DW	668
N2QT	1693	K3TN	1153	K2YWE	856	N4CF	604
KM3V	1410	W3LL	1151	K2GO	692	NW3L	538

DX Marathon Standings

CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC	CALL	DXCC
K5EK	306	N1RM	239	NN4RB	219	WA4PGM	178
K1HTV	294	N3AM	239	N4ZR	218	N4IW	174
W3ICM	290	K3AJ	238	N5HC	218	WC4J	174
K3STX	284	K4XL	238	N0YY	218	KA4RRU	169
N4DB	268	WD4ETU	225	WT3K	210	K2EJ	160
W3ZQI	264	K0ZR	225	N3QE	210	W3UR	137
KE4S	258	KB3Z	224	WA3AER	197	W3IDT	133
K3WA	257	N3RTW	221	K4FTO	193		
W3KN	242	W3DF	219	KK4ODQ	162		

Membership News – Tim N3QE

Chapter leaders please remember to complete the [Meeting Attendance Report](#). Members can check and update their roster details via the [Roster Lookup](#).

Upcoming Contests – from [WA7BNM](#)

ARRL RTTY Roundup	1800Z, Jan 4 to 2400Z, Jan 5
+ North American QSO Party, CW	1800Z, Jan 11 to 0559Z, Jan 12
+ Hungarian DX Contest	1200Z, Jan 18 to 1159Z, Jan 19
+ North American QSO Party, SSB	1800Z, Jan 18 to 0559Z, Jan 19
+ ARRL January VHF Contest	1900Z, Jan 18 to 0359Z, Jan 20
+ CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW	2200Z, Jan 24 to 2200Z, Jan 26

RED – scores count towards PVRC 5M Awards or Challenge Program

Editor’s Last Word – John K3TN

Thanks to K8LF, W3KX, K4ZW, WA3AER, N4RA. N1RM, K3ZJ and W3LPL for contributions to this issue of the PVRC newsletter

From the PVRC Treasurer – Ted WA3AER

PVRC has chosen not to implement an annual dues requirement. We depend on the generosity of all our club members to finance our annual budget. In addition, active PVRC members are expected to participate and submit logs for at least two PVRC Club Competition contests per year.

When contemplating your donation to PVRC, each member should consider the benefit you are receiving from PVRC and its many opportunities for your personal growth in our wonderful hobby, then donate accordingly.

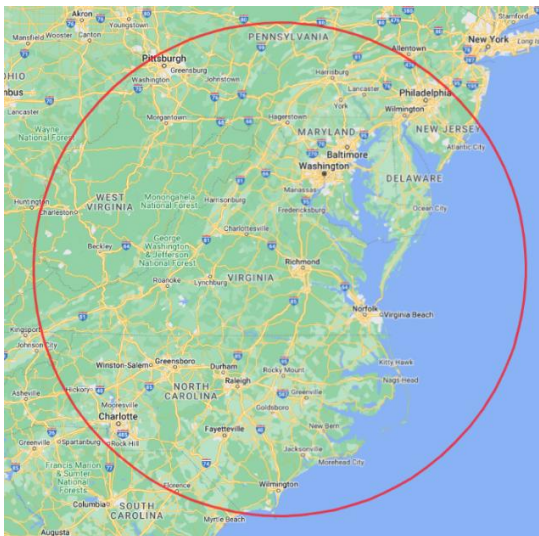
Direct donations to PVRC via Credit Card or PayPal may be made by clicking this "Donate" button and clicking the next Donate button that appears on your screen:



Donations to PVRC are not tax deductible

Eyeball QSO Directions

The latest info on local club meetings and get togethers will always be sent out on the [PVRC reflector](#) and posted on the PVRC [web site](#).



Now a Word From Our Sponsors

PVRC doesn't ask for dues, but the Club does have expenses. You can also support the Club by buying from the firms listed who advertise in the newsletter!



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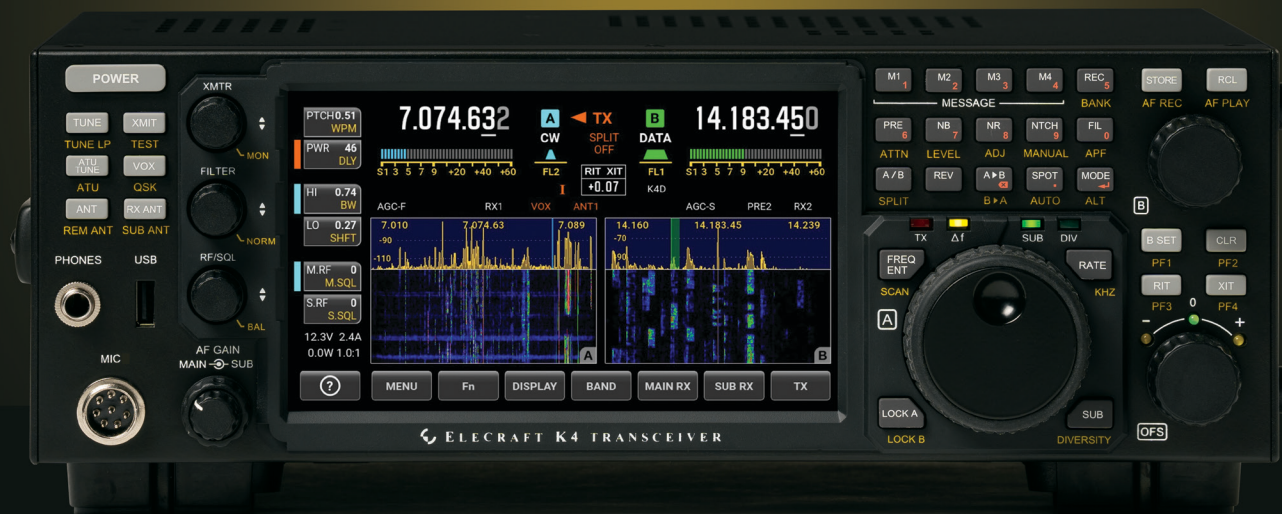
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A direct-sampling SDR you'll love to use

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Modular, hybrid architecture adapts to your needs

The basic K4 covers 160-6 m, with dual receive on the same or different bands. The K4D adds diversity receive, with a full set of band-pass filters for the second receiver. (Thanks to direct RF sampling, there's no need for crystal filters in either the K4 or K4D.) The K4HD adds a dual superhet module for extreme-signal environments. Any K4 model can be upgraded to the next level, and future enhancements—such as a planned internal VHF/UHF module—can be added as needed.

Single or dual panadapter, plus a high-resolution tuning aid

The main panadapter can be set up as single or dual. Separate from the main panadapter is our per-receiver *mini-pan* tuning aid, with a resampled bandwidth as narrow as +/- 1 kHz. You can turn it on by tapping either receiver's S-meter or by tapping on a signal of interest, then easily auto-spot or fine tune to the signal.

Comprehensive I/O, plus full remote control

The K4's rear panel includes all the analog and digital I/O you'll ever need. All K-line accessories are supported, including amps, ATUs, and our K-Pod controller. The USB display output supports its own user-specified format. Via Ethernet, the K4 can be 100% remote controlled from a PC, notebook, tablet, or even another K4, with panadapter data included in all remote displays. Work the world from anywhere—in style!

K4 KEY FEATURES

Optimized for ease of use

Modular, upgradeable design

7" color screen with touch and mouse control

ATU with 10:1+ range, 3 antenna jacks

Up to 5 receive antenna sources

Full remote control via Ethernet



The K4 interfaces seamlessly with the KPA500 and KPA1500 amplifiers

'The performance of their products is only eclipsed by their service and support. Truly amazing!' Joe - W1GO

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