

W1AW/3 Pennsylvania Operation

These are points to be aware of while operating W1AW/3 PA, including excerpts from the ARRL and previous W1AW/ events). Before reading below, refer to the complete *ARRL Centennial QSO Party* rules.

Band/Modes

- ARRL suggested frequencies
 - Operate in General class bands when possible to maximize accessibility
 - Out of band frequencies are for DX – listen and work in split mode
 - Watch traditional DX windows
 - Contacts using 3 modes on the same frequency are not allowed
- 60 meters will not be used
- Multiple W1AW/3 stations will not be assigned the same band/mode simultaneously. However, the following are considered separate modes:
 - On all bands, “digital” is split into RTTY and PSK31
 - On 75, “phone” is split into SSB and AM
 - On 10 and up, “phone” is split into SSB and FM
- No band/mode is assigned for **EME** as any operation is so unique and unlikely to conflict, we’re saying just go ahead, and coordinate amongst yourselves.

Exchange

- Minimum sent/received exchange is signal report. Interestingly, the League only requires us to report the callsign – report and location are optional, and they suggest only seeking fills for callsigns
- “Pennsylvania” need not be mentioned in all contacts, but League said “we like it,” and it’s good practice
- Exchanges need not be contest style – your choice, and your responses may vary according to the station you’re working. If things are slow, feel free to ragchew a bit. If there is a pileup, try to keep things moving briskly.
- Stations may request your county/grid – easiest is just to provide it

Centennial Points Challenge

- This is a simultaneous but separate event. In addition to working W1AW/n for WAS, during the year any station can work any other station at any time, and if the operator of the station worked is an ARRL member, or even better, holds an ARRL appointment or is an officer or on staff, that station is worth points depending on the position.
- For our event, the ARRL says providing appointment info is optional. If you are an ARRL appointee, and choose to do so, or to do so when asked, see the information for this event. .
- An alternative reply: “You’ll automatically get the points when you submit your log”
- By the way, all the /n stations are worth 5 points each time we’re worked (all band/modes)

QSLs

- W1AW/3 QSLs will be provided automatically to all stations by the League via the QSL Bureau. Stations must sign up online to request them.

Logging

- Your logging program **must** be able to export an ADI (ADIF) file.
 - If you don’t computer log, you must make arrangements to create a computerized log that exports to ADIF.

Submitting your log

- Export your W1AW/3 log file as an ADI (ADIF) file named with your call (the call of the station used if you're a guest op) and the county it's in. For example, **K3LA_MER.adi** will be Barney's log from Mercer county. Use the first three letters of the county name.
- E-mail your ADI log as an attachment to W3CDG@w3lif.org with Subject same as file name.
- Send your log as soon as you complete all your reserved time slots, but no later than the end of each operating day
- W3CDG will submit your log on your behalf to the ARRL.

Operating notes

- If you cannot be on for your reserved time, you MUST tell W3CDG via email.
- Be ready to operate ahead of time. It would be helpful to watch the 'Cluster, as the station preceding you is likely spotted. If you can't, attempt to locate them, and get on that frequency to get the sense of the band and the stations calling.
- Not all stations have 'Cluster access so can't spot themselves (which is allowed for this event by the way). If you use the 'Cluster and find/work one of our W1AW/3 stations, please spot them if they're not already.
- W1AW/0 in Arizona will be on this same week. Allow some space between you and them. Also make sure it's clear that you're "/3" in Pennsylvania in your CQs and exchanges.
- Also watch for and respect nets – the callsign is W1AW and your on-air behavior reflects on all ARRL members.
- Announce any need to QSY to those who may be listening so they can follow you
- You will likely have pileups to manage. Remember, it's you they're chasing, and you're in control. Slow down as needed. Pick a few letters of a strong signal, then only respond to that call. If you stay in charge, the pile will follow suit.
- Operate split as the situation warrants, both for DX that can't come up to our frequency, or even to manage a pileup. If you haven't done split, give yourself some practice into a dummy load, or with club members.
- Completely ignore the few rude ops that may show up. They'll go away – the pile will force them out by continually returning to *you*
- Bottom line, operate professionally, even though we're referred to as amateurs. Your operating reflects on you, your club, W1AW/ARRL, and Amateur Radio.

Most Important Rules:

- We must always identify as W1AW/3. Give exchange as 59(9) PA.
 - Please feel free to thank guys for their service if they mention being a VE or Card Checker or something.
 - If anyone asks, and maybe periodically if its not too busy, say to QSL via the ARRL.
 - Do not use your call to identify or in response to questions about the operation location or operator, this could lead some stations to think that you are handling QSL cards. Just reply with QTH Pennsylvania and QSL via ARRL. If a friend calls you, yes, say hello and that you are the operator, that is fine. I am more worried about someone who doesn't know what the event is about thinking that the operator or station is handling QSLs.
- Remain calm and courteous (no frequency fights, stay away from nets, ignore intentional QRM, etc)
- Be careful of band edges! Stay 3 kHz ABOVE the lower band edge on LSB and 3 kHz BELOW the upper band edge on USB.
- Contacts using 3 modes on the same frequency are not allowed... in other words, do SSB in normal SSB bands, CW in normal CW areas, and Digital in normal Digital segments.

Other Important Things

- Call CQ, there is not much sense in dialing around calling people, they will be looking for us.
- Stay in General portion of bands (or Tech on 10M SSB) as much as possible
- Use reasonable cw speeds, don't do 60 wpm just because you can. Slow down occasionally for the casual ops.
- Use only standard phonetics on phone. STROKE or SLASH are preferable to PORTABLE on SSB since some stations seem to log or spot it like W1AW/P3 if you say portable... best to just reduce syllables and use the others.
- It doesn't hurt to occasionally ask for DX Only if the band is open and stateside is loud, or to ask for mobiles/QRP only, just don't do that for more than a couple minutes.
- If pileups are really too big you can go split, Up 1-2 on cw/digital, Up 5-10 on phone and don't spread it out too wide is probably best... just be careful not to land your pileup on a net or other busy frequency.
- If things are slow feel free to switch modes more often. If someone asks to change modes for another contact and things are really slow go ahead and do it, but if there is a pile waiting just tell them to check for us later.

General FAQ Stuff

- How do I avoid interfering with nets? ARRL HQ has gotten some complaints about W1AW operations interfering with nets. This is somewhat expected given the size of the pileups on some bands where nets are prevalent like 20 SSB. I know I am not on the bands enough to know where the nets are and likely most of you are not either. Nets unrealistically expect that everyone should know that of course they are on 14.XXX every day at 1430 UTC. But, it is what it is and everyone will be happier if we avoid nets. The general advice is:
 - Listen before you transmit and check out your listening frequency range if you are going split. If you just take the approach of being a considerate operator, things should be OK 99% of the time.
 - Some of the major nets people have said to be on the lookout for include, but is obviously not limited to: Pacific Seafarers Net (14300), Century Club (3905, 7188/7178), Geratol (3668), TripleH (7190 @ 0700 UTC), County Hunters (14336 and many more often X36 on SSB and 56.5 on CW.), OMISS (14290), etc.
 - Similarly, we should also watch out for the SSTV areas notably 14230 +/- and established DX segments like 3790-3800.
 - Digital operators when operating RTTY should look out for PSK31 which is usually around .070 and JT around .075 and .076.
- Experience from other states is that 80-90% of their Digital QSOs are RTTY and the majority of the rest are PSK31. If you are capable of other digital modes give them a try as long as you are making QSOs.
- A good guide for RTTY sub-bands can be found at: [Rtty Subbands](#)
- Some hints on handling a RTTY pileup can be found at the following;handling a RTTY pileup is tricky if you have never done it.
 - [G0AZT](#) (See "Eddies Commandments for the DX Station")
 - [Contest Rty](#)
- What if someone calls me who I already have in the log but still wants to work me again? The easiest thing is to just work them again and log them again. They may be calling you because they want an insurance contact or they were not sure about their prior QSO. So, the advice is "Work and Log all Dupes". It will be faster than trying to convince them you already worked them and have them in the log.
- What if someone asks "How do I get your QSL card?" QSL cards from W1ØØAW and W1AW operating portable will be sent automatically via the QSL Bureau system to each U.S.A. station who

signs-up online with the ARRL to receive such cards at [this link](#). This is a one-time only use of the QSL Bureau for this purpose. Stations will need to have envelopes on file at their buro. QSLs will automatically be sent to stations outside the U.S.A. via the QSL Bureau as normal. QSLs may be requested directly from the ARRL also, with an SASE required for return.

Making Contacts

Think of yourself as being on a DXpedition somewhere rare. When you work a DXpedition how much do they say? Not much... A whole contact when things are working right takes only seconds and makes more people happy to get in the log.

A perfect contact

- CQ DE W1AW/3 (*Use SLASH or STROKE on voice, not PORTABLE*)
 - JA1AAA
- JA1AAA 59(9) PA
 - TU 59(9) blah blah... (*ignore all blah blah unless it is to correct his call*)
- TU W1AW/3 (*TU or 'Thanks' is optional, callsign should be used quite often, to signal the end of the contact; if you have a big pileup and have just been spotted, TU or "thanks" is enough since everyone already knows your call...but try to sign the call at least once per minute.*)

An almost perfect contact

- W1AW/3 QRZ
 - noise... JA2... noise
- JA2? (*don't say "question mark" on phone, use AGAIN, so SAY: "JA2 Again" or "who's the JA2" at most. Do this QUICKLY don't wait for the pileup to fade out and once you pick a part of a call don't change unless you are sure that no one there has that part.*)
 - less noise... JA2AA.. JA2AAA... noise
- JA2AAA 59(9) PA
 - JA2AAJ JA2AAJ 59(9) blah blah (*oops, he corrected his call*)
- JA2AAJ TU W1AW/3 (*note, on cw or rtty some logging programs will add the corrected call to the TU message, you have to say it on voice*)

Things **NOT** to say (All of these are time-wasters and not necessary):

- Please Copy
- Over
- you are
- roger roger roger got you now
- "you are a dupe", or "you are already in the log", etc... just work them again
- do not comment about intentional qrm, just ignore it, go split and turn the rx knob regularly
- repeat back their name, state, report, etc. just get their call and ignore the rest

What do I do when the pileup starts to build?

Now won't that be fun! If you like pileups you are going to have a great time operating as W1AW/3. If you have never experienced pileups you are about to. (And for the pileup novices there is some additional material later to look at). General experience from other state operations is:

- Avoid going by call areas if at all possible! This has been the operating technique that has generated the most complaints to ARRL HQ and the other W1AW/# operations. The general reason is that you will be asking the vast majority of the pileup to standby for long periods of time when they can hear you quite well. If you absolutely feel you have to thin out the pileup by going by call areas the advice I can offer you is:
 - Work no more than 3-4 stations in each call area before moving to the next one. This should let you get through all ten call areas in a half hour or less.
 - You can also throw in specific continent calls "Europe Only", "Asia Only", "DX Only" as well as asking for QRP and/or Mobiles.
 - If you have a band that has only a 30 minute window each day to some continent whereas several hours to the US, you better concentrate your operations in the 30 minutes to that continent and ask the US to standby. It is fine and helpful to explain that to the pileup: "US please standby while I work XXXXXXXX. I only have a 30 minute propagation window for them and want to work them when I can. I will be back to the US soon".
 - Be aware of where you have propagation now, where you don't, and how it will be changing as you move through the call areas. Nothing gets the pileup madder than to hear you fade away while you are working some other call area that they know will still have propagation hours from now.
- You are best off going split using standard split amounts - UP 5-10 on Phone, UP 1-2 on CW and UP 1-3 on Digital. If you have never operated split before make sure to try it out before getting on the air.
 - Remember you will still be mobbed if you keep listening on the same split frequency. You really need to move the receive frequency around thru the pileup else you lose most of the advantage of split.
 - For those of you that have not operated split before here is some advice from KM7R: "Realize if you operate split you will be doing it backwards from what almost all of us are used to when we work a DX station who is operating split. In the latter case, which we are familiar with, we keep our listening frequency fixed and change our transmitting frequency to find where the DX station is listening. Since when operating split as W1AW/3 you are now the DX station you will be keeping your transmitting frequency fixed and will be changing your listening frequency to pick out a call in the pileup. I highly recommend you practice this setup on your radio before you start operating as the buttons you push, the knobs you turn, and the way you use your VFO's will be different enough to really confuse you. I've been there, done that, so I speak from experience."

Handling a Pileup This is for those of you that have never been on the receiving end of a pileup. A pileup occurs when several stations are calling you at the same time and their callsigns overlap, intermix, and otherwise are hard to make out. Experience has shown that W1AW operations are, at times, creating pileups. So, first be ready for it to happen. Working pileups is a skill that is learned and developed.

Notes from K7ZO: *"I have some experience in this on Phone and RTTY during my Nicaragua operations. Imagine 50 JAs calling you all at the same time with the same signal strength on 10 Meters Phone. I survived that and you will too."*

Here is general advice:

- First and foremost stay calm and don't panic. You will figure it out, make QSOs, and keep going. Don't just spin the dial to get away from it. Remember, this is the fun part!
- **VERY IMPORTANT:** Don't let the pileup go for longer than a few seconds without asking for part of a call as the following suggestion explains. If the pileup is used to you transmitting quickly after finishing a QSO they will learn to only call once or twice then listen, if you let it go until it thins out after a minute or more they will keep calling long and longer each time until you give up.

- If you listen to the jumble of noise, at least on CW and Phone, you will hear bits and pieces of a callsign. It might be two letters, a letter and a number, just a number, or maybe even just a single letter. But even though you can't make out the whole callsign at once, you will hear parts of one. And that really becomes your first task - to just get part of a call. The idea then is to work back and forth with the other station to fill in the rest of the callsign. So, if in the pileup you hear a "Whiskey 3" respond back to the pileup with "Who is the Whiskey 3" or on CW & Digital send "W3?" Listen for the station to come back and try to get some more of the call. Perhaps now you hear "Whiskey 3 Alpha". Then say "Who is the Whiskey 3 Alpha" or "W3A?" on CW & Digital. Keep up this back and forth process until you get the whole call. In CW and Digital it is handy to program a memory or function key to send the partial callsign in the log and then the question mark. So in this case you would just enter W3 into the callsign field and then press that function key to send "W3?"... with N1MM you just enter the part of the call you hear and can either put the ? in the entry field or press F5 then F7 to send the partial call followed by a '?'.
- Do not give your exchange until you have the other station's callsign. The other stations expect this. So, if they hear you give the exchange they will assume you have their call and are then likely to QSY before you actually get their call in the log. Remember - exchange comes **after** getting the callsign.
- Unfortunately while you are trying to get the other station's callsign everyone else is not going to stand by. Most will, but not all. So even though you might say "Who is the Whiskey 3" many stations will keep calling. Whatever you do, ignore the other callers and keep working to get the station's callsign that has "Whiskey 3". This is known as **Controlling the Pileup**. If you start trying to work the "Whiskey 3" but then change to the "4 November" because you hear that the pileup will soon realize it is in their best interest to just keep calling when you ask for a specific station that does not contain part of their call. This is called "Losing control of the pileup". You don't want to do that.
- However, things being the way they are, at times you will find there really isn't a "Whiskey 3" out there. You can hedge your bet and try 'How about the 3?', before giving up, this gives you a quick chance to get a smaller pile to pick from. But if not then, of course, you have to move on. Often I will say, on Phone, "OK I guess there isn't a Whiskey 3 QRZ" to let the pileup know I am still in control.
- Those are the basics. And these apply whether you are working simplex or split. You move to split frequency operation when the pileup is so large and unruly that no one can hear you trying to work the other station because of all the QRM they are causing. You will know when it is time and often the pileup will tell you "Go Split, Go Split".
- Usually Digital operators on RTTY and PSK will need to go split before Phone and CW because the computer decoders can't separate out two calls from pileup. I know when I have worked RTTY pileups all I can do is just wait to see who the last guy is calling and then the decoder will give me some print I can use. Going split helps solve that problem.
- Working a pileup is a skill. It is something you learn and get better at with practice. Some of the other W1AW operations have posted videos and audios of their operators so you can get a feel for what it will be like for you. Check out:
 - [Phone Pileup](#) - see how many different calls you can hear!
 - [Phone Pileup](#) - another good Phone one from Utah, you can hear both sides of many QSOs
 - [CW Pileup](#) - a good CW one from the Utah team - you can hear both sides and the op working down the pileup
 - [NC Video](#) - a nice video from the North Carolina team on their week, including many QSOs including Digital/PSK31
- I would also suggest you listen to some pileups to get a feel for how they sound. Pretend you are the rare station all these folks are calling. You can find bunches of them by Googling "radio pileup recordings" and then just surfing around. Try to find ones that let you hear both sides of the QSO - transmit and receive. A couple sources of them are:
 - [DX University](#)

- [N6GQ](#) - Look in his Recordings section and "A few select recordings from my YN2AA operation"

Best of luck to each of you over the entire week! Have a ball!