

Jock White Field day Report 2023

I would like to dedicate this years report to two amateurs who we have lost in the last year: Douglas Birt ZL1BFS was a stalwart of the Hibiscus Coast branch 80 team and first introduced me to field day in 1980 with the Whangarei branch 28 team and Bruce Scahill ZL1BWG who was a keen CW field day operator.

Thanks to all of you who made the effort to participate in this years field day and a special thanks to all of you who organised the logistics and set up of the field stations. There were nearly 200 operators in the field.

A coronal mass ejection markedly reduced in 80 metre propagation resulting in the lowest activity on that band that I have ever seen, but the flip side was that 40 metre propagation was enhanced with plenty of contacts made.

There has been some talk about decreased participation in field day. I don't think the last two years have had normal levels of participation. Last year we had another COVID outbreak which affected things and now this year we had devastating weather event in parts of the North Island. I am looking forward to being back to normal next year and with greater activity.

The Radio Electronic Group branch (89) operated two stations co-sited as ZL1REG and ZL2REG using 04 as the extra multiplier. The fight for first place in the southern region was incredibly close. Just one extra multiplier would have put Eastern Southland in first place ahead of Otago. There were five field stations in the southern region, the most I have seen.

There have been a number of suggestions received by the NZART contest manager to boost activity, in response to the break-article which are being looked at. Something I think we should look at: is the value of the DX contact (10 points) too high? Working DX stations is a bit of a matter of but has a disproportionate effect on the final score.

Some feedback

A number of entries did not include summary sheets 2 and 3. These are essential for scoring your entry. There were several with ticks or a highlighter stripe in place of the callsigns, the rules are clear: you must record the callsigns of the of the branch you are claiming as a multiplier. Note also that the multiplier 0 is not valid.

Several entries left varying amounts of the required information on summary sheet 1 blank. If you don't include a section that you want to enter, I will choose what I think is the best section for you. 'Sangster shield' it not a field day section!

There were stations that fell well short of the required minimum contact numbers needed and as a result some of the multipliers you have claimed were not eligible, and those stations do not have these small numbers recorded on the result table. Please, please, when starting out plan to reach the 20 CW or 50 phone minimum contacts on the band you choose. In several cases just balancing the effort between the two bands would have solved this.

There were two entries that fell short of the required numbers but I let them through this year, both had a single operator. I have notified them of the numbers needed if they are going to be active next year. They did not influence the result of the southern section mentioned above.

Operating technique

This is raised with me every year by several branches, with varying levels of frustration. On phone there is no need for a routine read-back of the report that you have just received. An example of this: "thank you for your 59-001 branch 99... Read-backs take extra time and prevent others in the queue

from making contacts but when conditions are poor, or you missed something by all means ask for the report or part of the report again.

Valid Multipliers

80 Phone

06 08 10 20 22 23 26 27 28 29 30 35 37 42 55 56 58 61 65 68 69 87 89

80 CW

08 10 22 27 28 30 35 56 68 69 87

40 Phone

04 06 08 10 20 22 23 26 27 28 29 30 35 37 42 55 56 58 61 65 68 89 90

40 CW

08 10 22 26 27 28 29 30 35 56 68

Invalid Multipliers (insufficient contacts)

80 phone 04 12 90 18

80 CW 18 26

40 phone 12 87

40 CW 87

Genuine unsolicited team comments:

Clearly 80m was not a productive band.

Gentle weekend to get several new and prospective hams involved.

With little time left before the start I set up my transceiver and laptop only to discover that my Morse key was not with my gear...over two and a half hours later I had travelled home and collected it and was able to begin operation.

On top of a hill 283m ASL accessible only by 4WD and probably the most Southern station.

Eighty was pretty poor, 40m was a blast.

High sunspot numbers made 80 m hard going.

A couple of ladies visited our field station and were impressed seeing a person sending and receiving Morse code, especially with a straight key.

Note: MUST NOT have exhaust from the diesel generator facing door: had adverse feedback from the operators.

Weather was great.

Our (borrowed) CW operator made CW operation look easy – big thanks to him,

Thanks for check logs:

ZL3TK, ZL1BQA and ZL2HV

See you all again on February 24 and 25 2024

Stuart Watchman ZL2TW