

INTERSECTION OF SOTA AND VHF MOUNTAIN TOPPING

K7ATN – Etienne Scott, CN85

SOTA & VHF Mountaintopping

- Introduction to Summits on the Air (SOTA)
- Look at some important differences between SOTA and VHF Contesting & Mountaintopping
- Some examples of both
- Encouraging crossover between these two radiosports

WA7NYI circa 1971



K7ATN circa 2012

South Sister, Oregon = 3157m

and Bro gate the Section

K7ATN SOTA W7/CM-001

Introduction to SOTA

 SOTA was launched in 2002 in England and Wales, followed by Scotland

 Currently about 90 SOTA Associations around the world, with about 63,000 summits – only 16,800 have ever been activated!

 ~2000 summits in OR, ~2700 in WA – just 450 have been activated

One bottom line – define "portable"

- For ARRL VHF Contests, gear just needs to be movable (a general definition of portable)
- For SOTA, gear needs to be <u>carried</u> (a special definition of portable)

 There are ways to connect SOTA and VHF contesting and mountaintopping with benefits to both radiosports

More about SOTA

- There are 3,300 registered Activators and 3,400 Chasers worldwide, with perhaps 500 of each fairly active
- ~10 active Activators in OR, WA, ID
- 2.2 million QSOs in the SOTA database
- About 27% of QSOs are VHF+ (World)
- For me, about 7% QSOs VHF+
- Point based system

SOTA Rules for Activations

- Must be a SOTA Summit minimum of 500 feet prominence (independence)
- Public access to peak or with permission
- Activation within 80 vertical feet of peak
- Battery or solar powered equipment
- Not in or in vicinity of a motor vehicle
- Final approach is <u>non-motorized</u>

Even More SOTA Rules

- Simplex contacts (no relays either)
- Four QSO for Activation points
- One contact per station (not per band)
- No power or band limitations
- On your own schedule

SOTA Practices

- Internet spots are standard practice
- Coordination by any means Ok (cell, text)
- Multiple locations Ok
- Honor system for logging

VHF Rules

- One location only (unless Rover)
- Spots makes you multi-op/assisted
- Power and band limits
- "Portable" liberally defined
- One contact per band per station
- Fixed schedule
- Logs are checked and "adjusted"

Peter-W7/HG1DUL Mission Ridge, WA (Jan VHF)



SOTA Activation Zone



Etienne-K7ATN Bald Peak, OR (Jan VHF)



Etienne-K7ATN Dutton Ridge, OR (SOTA & Aug UHF)



Mike-KD5KC Franklin Mtn, TX (SOTA & Jan VHF)



Bruce-KI6JA South Mtn, ID (Sep VHF)



Joyce-KØJJW Humboldt Peak, CO (Colorado 14er)



Kyle-KD5EUO Rover, TX (Jan VHF)



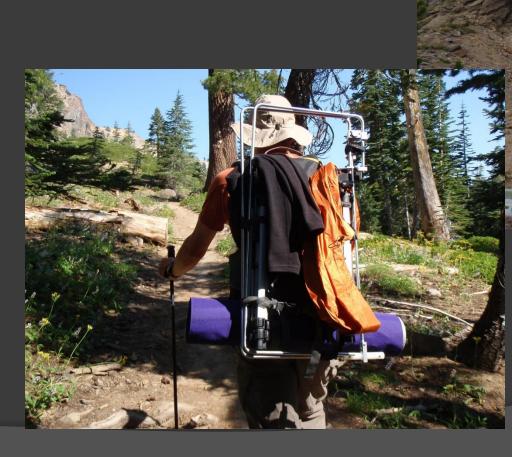
Rich-KR7W Tolmie Peak, WA (SOTA)



James-**KDØMFO** Mt. Herman, CO (June VHF)



Dave-KB5WIA Brokeoff Mtn, CA (Sep VHF)



Stu-WØSTU Mt. Herman, CO (Jan VHF)



Zach-K1ZK Mt. Hunger, VT (June VHF)





Ways VHF & SOTA don't quite work SOTA is often QRP VS. VHF Weak Signal mostly QRO SOTA Activators use FM HT VS. VHF Weak Signal use SSB+CW SOTA Activators use vertical polarization VS. VHF Weak Signal use horizontal

Ways VHF & SOTA don't quite work

 SOTA Activators use small antennas vs.
 VHF Weak Signal use big antennas

- SOTA requires four QSOs anytime vs.
- VHF Weak Signal primarily active during contests

Ways it <u>could</u> work

How to bring SOTA and VHF Contesting Together – even a little

- Why I am here KI7JA, KB7ME, WW7D, K7YDL
- How often VHF Contesters could claim SOTA points
- How often SOTA Activators could submit VHF contest logs
- Incourage SOTA to do VHF activations
- Encourage SOTA activations during VHF contests

Ways it <u>could</u> work

Attention to SOTA activations using FM?

SOTA Microwave Challenge + UK Microwave Group

- 23cm to 24 GHz
- One station must be on a SOTA summit
- Based on distance (lat/lon or 6 digit grid)
- I Effective 1 July 2014

2014 Activities

- SOTA Activators encouraged to do VHF
- W7 Summit –to-Summit (S2S)
 Weekend: 2-3 August + UHF Contest + KØNR's Colorado 14er event
- NA SOTA Weekend: 13-14 September + September VHF Contest
- 1.2 GHz activations for Microwave Challenge

Thanks for listening...

– and for the QSOs!

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References

- SOTA main site: <u>www.sota.org.uk</u>
- Spots & Alerts: <u>http://sotawatch.org</u>
- SOTA logging: <u>www.sotadata.org.uk</u>
- Northwest SOTA site: <u>www.pnwsota.org</u>
- Yahoo SOTA North America Group
- SOTA Association Reference Manuals
 - www.sota.org.uk/docs/ARM-W7-Oregon.pdf
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