

Using Ham Radio Deluxe and the N3FJP Suite of contest programs for Digital Contesting

This is an explanation of how to do digital contesting using these programs, as we did during Field Day the past two years. This will work for any digital contest that N3FJP supports, using their software that is written in C#, not Visual Basic 6. At this point this includes all ARRL contests, all CQ contests, and some of the State QSO Parties. Please note that I am not affiliated with any of these software companies, and receive nothing for recommending them.

In our Field Day setup, I used three pieces of software. HRD 5.24, N3FJP Field Day Logger, and the W4ELP Bridge. The link for HRD is <http://www.mannini.it/software/Ham-Radio-Deluxe-Download/setuphrd52438.exe> and will download version HRD 5.24.38. This is the version we used, and it is free. You are welcome to buy version HRD 6, which is a paid version, which will work also. Secondly, you need a program by N3FJP. This is available at <http://www.n3fjp.com/index.html> please note that most of this software costs \$8.99 per program, and every contest is its own program. Multimode contests are contained in one program, even if they occur on different dates, such as CQWW, which has phone, CW, and digital weekends, but one program does all three. If you are going to spend over \$49.99, you are better off buying the entire suite for that price. I would not recommend buying the CD for \$64.99, unless you do not have the means to download the individual programs. If you purchase AC Log, which is the generic non-contest logging program, that is \$24.99 in itself, so that is half the price of the suite. The third piece you need is the W4ELP Bridge available at <http://n8sdr.sopmcity.org/images/W4ELP/W4ELP%20Lookup%20V3.04.3%20Setup.zip>. This piece is free. It includes not only the bridge software that connects HRD and N3FJP, but also has a call sign lookup feature that will popup info on each call sign you enter, such as address.

HRD seems to require you to interface your rig to your computer in order to operate. At Field Day, when I was plagued by RFI locking up my computer, I attempted unsuccessfully to bypass that feature. I'm not sure if this is possible, but I was unable to do it. Most rigs offer a method of doing this, whether through a USB interface, a serial interface, or a custom interface. If you need a custom interface, such as I use with my Kenwood TS-850, you can look for one on E-Bay, which is where I got mine. If you need a serial interface, and your computer does not have a serial port, you can use a USB to serial converter, available at many locations. The advantage of interfacing the rig to the computer is that the logging program receives the band, frequency, and mode from the rig, and you can make band, mode, and tuning adjustments from the software. If you have RFI problems, put clamp-on chokes on likely offending cables.

Once you have the software installed, run the HRD and N3FJP in either order, and the W4ELP third. Once the W4ELP is launched, keep your hands off the mouse while it initializes, I think there is one OK button you need to press. The Add Log Entry (ALE) window of HRD needs to be on screen. On the ALE window of HRD, next to the Sent RST (599), put your outgoing exchange in the field to the right. For example, for Field Day, this would be "4A NC" or whatever you are using. If the exchange info is two or more fields, use a space between them. The received exchange goes in the field directly below this one, next to the Received RST field. The same syntax rules apply, if there is more than one piece, separate them with a space, and they must be in the same order the N3FJP program is expecting them. On the N3FJP Field Day Logger, the Class is first, the Section second.

Here are the Macros I had programmed for Field Day:

- 1) CQ FD CQ FD DE <my:other1> <my:other1> <my:other1> K <erase> <stop>
- 2) <his: callsign> PSE CPY <my:other2> <my:other3> <my:other2> <my:other3> DE <my:other1> K <erase> <stop>
- 3) <his:callsign> TU FOR <his:recvd_exch> GL DE <my:other1> K <erase> <stop>
- 4) <my:other1> <my:other1> <erase> <stop>
- 5) <his:callsign> TU FOR <his:rcvd_exch> PSE COPY <my:other2> <my:other3> <my:other2> <my:other3> DE <my:other1> K <erase> <stop>
- 6) <his:callsign> AGN AGN <erase> <stop>
- 7) <his:callsign> PSE COPY <my:other2> <my:other3> <my:other2> <my:other3> DE <my:other1> K <erase> <stop>

All of the commands contained in <...> can be pulled from the menu as you are creating the macro, or you can just type it in. They are spelling and case sensitive. I could have had a Macro 8 and a Macro 9, I only needed 7. The field <his:callsign> is the callsign you type into the Call Sign field of the ALE window. The <my:other1>

is your call sign, <my:other2> is your Class, <my:other3> is your Section. There is a profile setup window where you edit all these.

The W4ELP Bridge is controlled by the numeric keypad on the right of your keyboard. You must have NUM LOCK set to ON. The number keys 1 through 9 will send the macro of that number. The Period key on the numeric keypad will delete the ALE window without saving it, and put the cursor in the Call Sign field. The Enter key on the numeric keypad will save the ALE window into the N3FJP program, clear the ALE window, and put the cursor in the Call Sign field for the next contact.

The ALE window on HRD is filled in using the main keyboard number and letter keys. Use the Tab key to move to the next field. After typing the call sign and hitting Tab, the call sign will move to N3FJP and it will fill in the call sign and do a dupe check. If there is a dupe, you will get the normal error message from N3FJP, and it will tell the W4ELP Bridge. At this point you can hit the 2 key on the numeric keypad, and instead of sending your exchange, it will send a "Worked B4" message. Then hit the Period on the numeric keypad to clear the old call sign and get ready for the next contact.

You can put the cursor in the N3FJP program and do editing at any time. Just click back in the Call Sign field of the ALE window when you are finished. If the three pieces of software seem to be out of sync, press CTRL-ALT-B on the main keyboard to restart the Bridge program.

Each of these pieces of software comes with a PDF Help file which you can study for further operating instructions.

The following N3FJP software has been tested with HRD 5.24 and the W4ELP Bridge as of June 3, 2014 :

CQ WPX

ARRL Field Day

ARRL IARU HF

ARRL RTTY Roundup

NA Sprint

NAQP

RAC

ARRL VHF Contest

Ten-Ten

7th Region QSO Party (in-region and out of region)

California QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Florida QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Georgia QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Illinois QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Indiana QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Maryland QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Michigan QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Minnesota QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Mississippi QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Nebraska QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

New England QSO Party (in-region and out of region)

North Carolina QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Ohio QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Oklahoma QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Pennsylvania QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Texas QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Virginia QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Wisconsin QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

West Virginia QSO Party (in-state and out of state)

Ron Thomas N4WYR