

2017 ILQP Analysis by N9JF

Every running of the ILQP faces certain challenges. During no other event in my memory have we had so much rain across the state. This may have kept some of the fixed stations indoors and increased activity, but it certainly made life “interesting” for the mobile, rover and portable operations. As the front made its way across the state, some areas gradually dried out and others grew increasingly soggy. A couple of mobile and rover stations seemed to never get out of the pouring rain. Tents blew down, radios got wet and antennas that functioned perfectly when dry suddenly decided to open up or short out. A case was made for redundancy and flexibility.

A tremendous amount of cheerleading and organization was done ahead of time by various individuals and clubs around the state. We appreciate all of the effort and the outstanding results that resulted in coverage of the state from end to end and enthusiastic calls from all over the continent and beyond.

Special thanks go to the mobile and rover stations and to the portable operators who came in from out of state.

It is hard to overstate the effect that mobile, rover and portable operations had on state coverage, especially in the southern part of Illinois. While there were a good number of fixed stations operating from southern Illinois, including some not heard before, the number of counties activated by non-residents was staggering. There MAY have been six counties activated only by fixed stations: BOND, IROQ, LAKE, LAWR, MCHE and WOOD.

All 102 counties were active. Two in the northwest and several in the southern part of the state were easy to miss: CARR and JODA, EDGR, EDWA, WABA and WAYN. Another tough one was LAWR with only N80OU reportedly operating from there. However, two stations logged one of the rovers from LAWR even though the rover had been in the neighboring county and may have forgotten to change his QTH in the log file. They were given a “pass” since there was corroboration.

Some things puzzle me year after year. Every contact with MACN was with a mobile station. Are there no hams in Decatur? Really???

What were the easiest and hardest counties to work? Obviously this was not the same on both modes, since several counties were primarily activated by mobile stations on CW. Here were the overall statistics:

ADAM	497	
ALEX	126	two rovers, all on phone
BOND	274	
BOON	138	
BROW	125	
BURO	131	
CALH	105	W9WE found a microphone, so yes, both modes!
CARR	41	
CASS	63	almost entirely CW
CHAM	641	

CHRS	135	
CLAY	95	
CLNT	38	all on phone
CLRK	232	
COLE	167	
COOK	1189	no, you should not have missed COOK
CRAW	28	all on CW
CUMB	159	
DEKA	255	
DEWT	43	all AD4EB/m all cw
DOUG	53	same as above
DUPG	1244	nope, shouldn't have messed DUPG, either.
EDGR	37	two mobiles, all CW
EDWA	23	almost all phone
EFFG	59	
FAYE	111	
FORD	195	
FRNK	200	mostly phone
FULT	76	almost all CW
GALL	348	thank you, W9AIU!
GRUN	271	
HAML	344	see GALL....
HANC	281	
HARD	126	
HENR	167	
HNDR	47	mostly CW
IROQ	379	
JACK	408	
JASP	67	
JEFF	217	
JERS	70	all on phone
JODA	33	
JOHN	91	
KANE	491	
KANK	781	
KEND	105	
KNOX	232	
LAKE	1372	I guess we didn't really NEED a mobile in LAKE
LASA	382	
LAWR	37	all on phone
LEE	116	
LIVG	164	
LOGN	162	
MACN	86	
MADN	315	
MARI	61	
MASN	49	

MCDN	47	all on CW
MCHE	427	
MCLN	80	
MCPN	587	
MNRD	100	
MNRO	173	
MNTG	161	
MORG	175	
MOUL	171	
MRCR	49	
MSHL	35	almost all CW
MSSC	86	
OGLE	92	
PEOR	792	
PERR	48	all on phone
PIAT	82	
PIKE	232	
POPE	129	
PULA	320	
PUTN	100	
RAND	185	
RICH	158	
ROCK	221	
SALI	462	
SANG	253	
SCHY	216	
SCLA	1043	
SCOT	170	
SHEL	96	
STAR	46	all on CW
STEP	264	
TAZW	147	
UNIO	367	
VERM	116	
WABA	35	
WARR	50	
WASH	52	
WAYN	40	
WBGO	437	
WHIT	356	see GALL
WILL	615	
WMSN	192	
WOOD	547	
WTSD	75	

Out of state:

There were big logs sent from many states across the nation though naturally, with a big percentage of the activity on 40 meters, most of the high scorers were from "40 meter range". However, 40 went long really early this year and you could pretty much work coast to coast on the band from about 2000Z until the end. Logs were submitted from nearly all fifty states and from several Canadian provinces, and contacts were reported with both VO1 and VO2 (which technically are separate multipliers, but no one worked both), and from VE8.

DX

While conditions were not all that great on 20 meters and up, DX worked was quite a bit better than in 2016. A total of 349 DX contacts made it into submitted logs from a total of 23 DXCC entities. We appreciate the contacts and the multipliers from all of the DX who called!

The mix of band/mode contacts is enlightening. Though mobiles were overwhelmingly found on CW only, the overall results in submitted logs were as follows: (These percentages are approximate; one sizable mobile log was lost, and percentages are of the total contacts reported) .

CW: 48%, PHONE: 51.9 % Digital: .09% Total QSO's, 39,880.

On CW:

10 meters: .005 % (no great surprise there....)

15 meters: .013 %

20 meters: 5.1 %

40 meters: 29.2 %

80 meters: 13.8 %

160 meters: .55 %

On phone (including 2 meter FM):

2 meters: .14 %

10 meters: .02 %

15 meters: .008 %

20 meters: 5.5 %

40 meters: 38.9 %

80 meters: 6.6 %

Digital:

20 meters: .09 %

If it seemed like the action was on 40 meters, you were not imagining things. About 68% of all contacts occurred on that band. However, if you thought NOBODY was going to 20 meters, you weren't paying attention. More than 10 % of all contacts were made on 20 meters with CW and phone evenly split. That amounts to more than 4000 contacts. Most counties were available on 20 at some point.

Log-checking:

Every (reasonable) attempt was made to accept logs in various formats and properly interpret the contents. Some of them took some work. Thanks to those who resubmitted when asked to do so. Four logs had incomplete information that could not be rescued or completed and served as check logs. We appreciate the submission of those as well.

Once logs were all received and compiled, the task began to properly credit contacts and multipliers accurately logged. To reiterate the line from the rules, "Entrants are encouraged to use the standard county abbreviations found on the summary sheet." These have not changed in many years. We are still using the ones established back in the 90's by RAMS and have found no need (or advantage) to change them. If your logging software does not have them updated, you might consider updating the software. Somehow, when the state of Illinois was founded, no one thought about the need for non-ambiguous four-letter abbreviations for all 102 counties. There is a Will County (WILL) and a Williamson County (WMSN). Working both and logging both as "WILL" *won't* fly any longer. There is a Macon County (MACN), a Macoupin County (MCPN), a Madison County (MADN) and a McDonough County (MCDN). Logging both Macon and Macoupin as "MACN" or as "MCON" won't cut it. There is a White County (WHIT) and a Whiteside County (WTSD). The state of Illinois has enough problems right now without renaming counties, though you might write your legislator if you have strong feelings on the subject.

Oh...and the postal abbreviation for Nebraska has been "NE", not "NB" since the 60's.

For the second year in a row, the most-often-busted callsign was AD4EB's. Jim, keep coming back, and people will eventually figure out who you are! ☺

And the winners are....

Illinois Fixed Station High Power:

K9CT led the pack once again. Craig and his fine station turned in a great score and made sure virtually no one missed PEOR. A bit behind were K9NR (KANK), K9BGL (SCLA), WS9V (MCPN) and KI9A (SCLA), all scoring over 100,000 points. K9NR worked the most counties (94) out of this group, with K9CT finding 90. Not quite making the top five scores, WT2P/9 found an impressive 92 counties.

Illinois Fixed Station Low Power:

K9PG (DUPG) repeated as the winner in this category, doubling the score of the next closest competitor. While not lagging very far behind K9CT's high power score, Paul found 97 counties to top all entrants in that respect. W9QL (LAKE) was high on the "counties-caught" list with 85. Rounding out the top five in the category were K9CS (IROQ), K9KM (LAKE) and WB9HFK (CHAM).

Illinois Fixed Station QRP:

WM9Q (LAKE) was the sole entry in the category and worked an impressive 224 CW QSO's with 5 watts or fewer.

Illinois Mobile:

AD4EB and driver KI4HVY again invaded from Tennessee. That's the kind of invasions we appreciate! Jim and Melanie activated 22 counties, from MSSC to CHAM, and logged 991 CW contacts, scoring an impressive win in the category. It's really tough to work a lot of IL counties when you are mobile, as evidenced by Jim's total of 40 county multipliers. One either loses time sitting in pileups, calling needed counties, or just keeps CQing and hope they call in. In a short contest, you can't do everything.

K0PC came down from the Minnesota Twin Cities area and put on a great mobile effort for the second straight year. Pat also did CW only and, like Jim, maintained a rate of over 100 per hour, totaling 876 contacts. He activated 20 counties across the northern tier and the west-central area.

N0AC came from Iowa as N0I and activated several counties. Unfortunately, computer gremlins ate Bill's log. Bill, we hope you will recover and join us again next year as we certainly appreciated the contacts!

Two other mobiles came from out of state: W0RMS came from Missouri and operated from 3 counties in the southwest; AA0TT and KC9CIK likewise migrated east and activated a swath across southern IL as W9Z. W0RMS worked more counties and found more multipliers than did any other mobile.

Illinois Rover:

Exercising the "right to move but not the necessity", five entrants entered as "rovers", often stopping on county lines. K9CQ, operated by K9CQ and W9RNY, won the category while operating from five counties in the west-central part of the state and providing both modes for the chasers. In second place was ND9E in four southern IL counties, followed by W9WB in eight counties up north, K0KEV east of the St. Louis area and WA9JTG further to the east.

Illinois Portable:

Largely organized by PRIME ARA, a total of twenty-two operations set up as IL Portables in 2017. All told, they activated just about half of the IL counties and did so in good style. About half used high power, and at least half operated on both phone and CW.

If you did not work GALL, HAML, SALI and WHIT, you weren't paying attention. W9AIU (operated by WA9CJO and WB0SND) called CQ a lot and also did some very effective searching to average over 80 contacts per hour, during which they also worked 89 counties....more than any other portable station.

A low-power portable, NR9Q, came in second overall among portables, phone only, and found 80 counties. KC9I was not far behind Chris, with KD0NEO (WA0IYY and KD0NEO), another high power station, barely edging out W9W (N0KTK and KE0HXL) for fourth place. KU9Z (NE9P and KU9Z) were in fifth but had the second-highest multiplier total and an impressive QSO total from their single-county state park location. K9IR was

a first-time portable entrant from a 4-county corner in the north-central region. WR9L handed out two counties and found 105 multipliers, while KM9O operated from a three-county corner in the middle of nowhere southern Illinois. Dennis, I've been there....

Thanks to all of the portables for your efforts. I know a couple of you got really wet before the day was over!

Though there was no "official category" as such K3WA and K9ZO combined as W9SMC as a Multi-2 station. Bill and Ralph scored an impressive 216,717 points and found 141 multipliers. No one should have missed WOOD! We may consider adding this category another year, especially if someone wants to sponsor a plaque ☺.

Out of state:

DX: There were some very good scores achieved by DX entrants, led by OM2VL's astounding 161 QSO's and 79 counties worked. Laci's biggest problem was that many on 40 meter SSB did not operate in the segment where he could call them, nor did they tune low enough in the band to find his booming signal late in the afternoon. A group of DL's also made good showings, led by DL3DXX, who narrowly edged out DL3GA.

Stateside and VE: K1RO found 90 counties and seemed to be everywhere. Operating with high power, Mark did not sit in most pileups very long and made 331 contacts. Operating with low power, WB8WQK was the second-high scoring non-IL station. Right behind Jeff, was K5KPE, Bob, from Arkansas, who found a high total (for non-IL) of 96 counties....a great accomplishment. The only others to work 80 or more counties from outside IL were W5TM (OK), W8TM (OH), KW0J (IA) and AF5CC (OK).

The above-mentioned qualified for the "Illinois Edible Award" by working at least 200 stations or 75 counties. Others who qualified (or were granted "horseshoes and hand grenades" status) included K0OO (MD), WA3HAE (PA), K3TW (FL) and WN4AFP (SC).

In the QRP group, there were nine entrants from out of state, led by KE0TT (MN) who worked an impressive 56 counties.

There were several category records set this year. See the accompanying files for the updated statistics.