Field Day Keyboard Contacts

For Field day, there are 2 things we can do with Packet Radio: Keyboard contacts, and passing NTS messages. This is a very short how-to to make field day Keyboard contacts with packet radio. Note: all commands are followed with a Carriage Return/Enter <cr> and may not be shown here.

Keyboard-to-Keyboard Frequencies

2 meters: 144.350, 145.030, 145,050
440: 433.510, 433.530

Reference:

KPC3 Manual: https://kantronics.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/KPC-3Plus-Manual-RevH.pdf, Start at bottom of page 61.
NCPA Digital Band Plan: https://ncpa.ampr.org/demo/digital_band_plan.php#2m

Important TNC Commands

Command	What you type	Description
TNC Prompt	cmd:	Whenever you see "cmd:" you are in command mode and can issue commands to the TNC
Connect	C <call_sign>	Connects you to the named station *Example:* cmd: c kn6pe connects to his keyboard for chatting cmd: c k6fb-2 connects to the Las Cumbres ARC PBBS cmd: c k6fb-7 connects to the LCARC KA-node cmd: c w1xsc-1 connects to the SCC RACES BBS
Control C	<cntl-C>	Returns you to command mode from converse mode
Converse	conv	Puts the TNC is converse mode. Anything you type after this will be immediately transmitted. This mode is often used for calling CQ, for transmitting beacons, and for informal round table chats.
Disconnect	D	Disconnects you from the station to which you are connected.
Monitor	Mon [ON | OFF]	Displays or turns monitor on or off. This lets you see the other traffic that is on the frequency.
Unproto	Unproto [CQ]	Unproto sets up the path for anything that is subsequently typed in the Convers Mode where no connection exists. By default, it all goes to "CQ". This is the default setting. No need to change this.

Calling CQ

Step	You type
1. Put your TNC into converse mode:	cmd: conv <cr>
2. Transmit a CQ to let people know you are out there.	CQ CQ CQ Field Day KN6PE <cr>
3. Interested individuals may connect to you and complete the exchange, or just chat back to you in converse mode.	Reply with your information
4. Log the contact.	

Answering a CQ, chat mode

Step	You type
5. Put your TNC into converse mode:	`cmd: conv <cr>`
6. When you see a station calling CQ, just type their call, your call, and your exchange. For instance:	`<their_call>, this is <your call>, 1D SCV<cr>`
7. Make sure they reply and state your call sign and their exchange information	
8. Log the contact.	

Answering a CQ, connect mode

Step	You type
9. Put your TNC into command mode:	`<cntl-C>`
10. When you see a station calling CQ, connect to their call	`cmd: c KI6LDM` (example) (Wait for the TNC to reply that you are connected)

11. State your call and your exchange.	`1D SCV, copy?`
	(they should reply with something similar)
	`Thanks! Good luck with the contest!`

12. Disconnect from that station	`<cntl-C>` `D <cr>`
13. Log the contact.	

Example #1

KN6PE calls CQ in chat mode	AI6CC answers in chat mode
	`Mon on` `conv`

`Mon on`
`conv`
`CQ CQ CQ Field Day, KN6PE`
	`KN6PE this is AI6CC 1D SCV, copy?`

`AI6CC this is KN6PE copy, 1D SCV`	`Copy, good luck with the contest!`
`CQ CQ CQ Field Day, KN6PE`	

Example #2

KN6PE call CQ in chat	AI6CC answers in connect mode
	`Mon on`

`conv`
`CQ CQ CQ Field Day, KN6PE`
 	
`***CONNECTED TO AI6CC` (TNC connect msg)
	`cmd: c kn6pe`
	`***CONNECTED ***` (TNC connect msg)

	`Please copy 1D SCV`

`Copy. I am also 1D SCV`
 	
`*** DISCONNECTED`
`CQ CQ CQ Field Day, KN6PE`
	`Thanks, 73.`
	`<cntl-C>`
	`D`
	`*** DISCONNECTED`

Hints

1. Consider building a text file with some standard text replies. Then, you can just copy and paste it into the Ipserial program to speed your replies.
2. Feel free to be as chatty or terse as you want. This is packet… a few extra words won't matter!
3. Start off on 145.050. This is a popular Keyboard-to-Keyboard frequency.
4. Get your antenna up as high as possible to be heard.

NTS messaging

The present-day National Traffic System (NTS) evolved out of this eighty-year history of public service and disaster communications tradition. The NTS is still sponsored by the American Radio Relay League. It features an orderly method of reliably moving messages across the continent on a daily basis as a public service through a system of voice and CW nets, and Packet Radio BBS forwarding systems.

NTS BBS Frequency

2 meters: Connect to K6FB-2 on 145.050

<< PENDING >>