

2026 CQ 160-Meter Contest

CW & SSB Results

The Premier Topband Contest

By Andy Blank, N2NT

Introduction

The 2026 CQ 160-Meter Contest once again proved that Top Band is the great equalizer in amateur radio contesting. With its demanding propagation, relentless noise floors, and need for exceptional antenna systems, 160 meters rewards patience, skill, and dedication above all else. This year's event drew participants from across the globe, competing in both CW and SSB modes — each presenting its own unique challenges on the low band.

It must be said at the outset that propagation conditions this year were, by most accounts, terrible. Elevated geomagnetic activity throughout both contest weekends brought high absorption, auroral noise, and disrupted polar paths that are so critical for transatlantic contacts on 160 meters. Many operators reported frustratingly short openings, degraded signal levels, and significant difficulty working multipliers that would

normally be routine. That scores remained competitive under such difficult conditions is a testament to the skill and persistence of the entrants — and makes the top results all the more impressive.

CW entries, benefiting from the inherent signal-to-noise advantages of its nature, produced the contest's highest scores despite the conditions. The SSB results, while lower in absolute numbers, reflect equally fierce competition and remarkable operating perseverance given the additional demands of SSB on 1.8 MHz in a high-noise environment.

"160 meters: where great stations are built, and legends are made."



#8 in the USA on CW was Victor K1LT from Ohio. The picture doesn't show all the fine equipment Victor uses to be one of the "Top of Top Band".

Participation by the Numbers

The 2026 CQ 160-Meter Contest drew a total of 1,929 CW entries and 1,013 SSB entries. As has been the trend in recent years, the Single-Operator Assisted category was the largest in both modes, reflecting the continued growth of

spotting network use on Top Band. The tables below place 2026 in the context of the past twelve years of contest participation for both CW and SSB.

CW Entries by Category — 2015 to 2026

Year	SO HP	SO LP	SO QRP	SOA	Multi	Check	Total
2026	276	416	89	999	86	63	1,929
2025	299	458	113	1,061	96	70	2,097
2024	339	485	107	1,062	91	82	2,166
2023	346	566	112	1,101	107	88	2,320
2022	482	711	146	1,381	135	98	2,953
2021	583	854	175	1,502	146	118	3,378
2020	501	775	113	1,362	166	134	3,051
2019	459	719	125	1,166	166	105	2,740
2018	475	727	112	1,064	160	153	2,691
2017	478	798	122	1,014	139	110	2,661
2016	420	705	115	737	135	51	2,163
2015	446	709	116	698	119	96	2,184

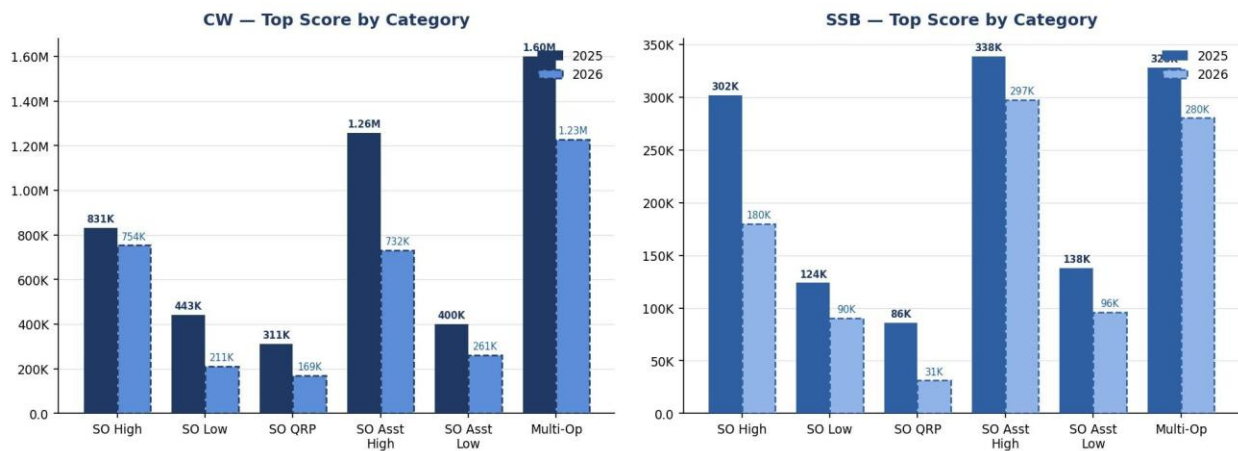
SSB Entries by Category — 2015 to 2026

Year	SO HP	SO LP	SO QRP	SOA	Multi	Check	Total
2026	172	326	30	414	48	23	1,013
2025	179	298	44	407	50	20	998
2024	216	317	50	487	44	23	1,137
2023	212	369	58	450	65	21	1,175
2022	221	362	38	404	59	32	1,116
2021	352	537	71	596	71	42	1,669
2020	295	480	42	524	92	38	1,471
2019	261	298	39	403	87	35	1,123
2018	276	446	41	413	91	36	1,303
2017	258	409	36	387	90	44	1,224
2016	247	441	44	343	77	39	1,191
2015	290	418	35	295	72	37	1,147

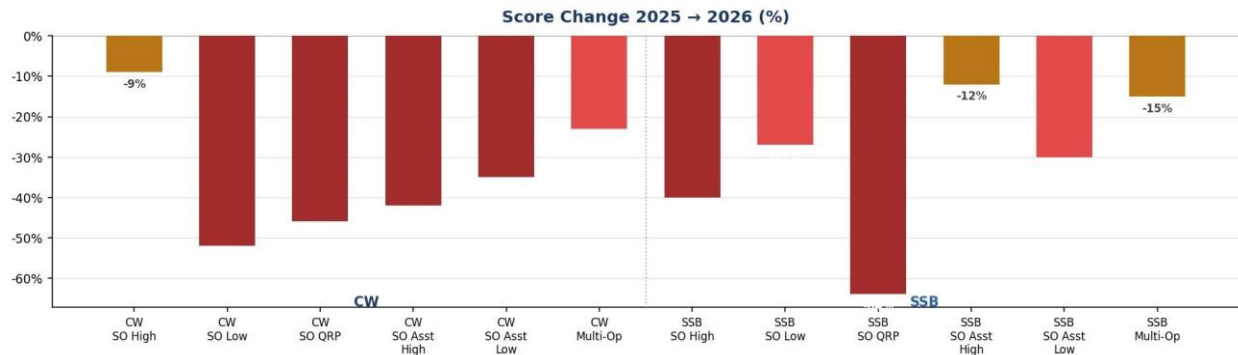
2025 vs. 2026 Score Comparison

The charts below compare the top score in each category between 2025 and 2026 for both CW and SSB. The impact of the difficult propagation conditions in 2026 is evident across the board, with scores down in every category. The CW Single-Operator High Power category saw the smallest decline (-9%), while SSB QRP suffered

the largest drop (-64%). Despite the conditions, competition remained fierce and the results are a testament to the dedication of Top Band operators worldwide.



Top scores by category — CW and SSB, 2025 vs. 2026



Percentage change in top scores by category, 2025 → 2026

CW RESULTS

CW — Single-Operator

World Single-Operator — Open

The CW DX Single-Op category was dominated by CQ9A, operated by Harry RA3AUU, who captured the world title with a commanding 753,585 points. Stan ZF5T from the Cayman Islands was hot on their heels with 703,608, demonstrating the Caribbean's superb path to both North America and Europe on Top Band. The European contingent showed tremendous depth, with 4X7M operated by 4Z4AK from Israel (397,980), S53A operated by S50A from Slovenia (389,499), and G5W operated by G3BJ from Great Britain (362,270) rounding out an impressive top five.

"Poor conditions and hard work!" —
G5W

"The worst propagation in my memory since 2012. Every QSO is a battle. I

couldn't reach several EU mults. Only 3 QSOs with NA: K3ZM, K1LZ and ZF5T have fantastic ears!" — 4U1A

Call	Score
CQ9A	753,585
ZF5T	703,608
4X7M	397,980
S53A	389,499
G5W	362,270
LN8W	342,224
LY5W	340,500
YT9W	339,096
SP4T	335,520
OM7K	318,849

USA Single-Operator

The U.S. CW competition was a classic East Coast battle at the top, with K3ZM edging out AA1K — 301,889 to 292,536. N2MF (250,292) and NA8V (248,332) followed closely in a tight race that highlighted how much a good location and superior beverage antenna system matter on the low bands. WF2W (193,512) and W5ZN (190,256) rounded out a strong top six, with W5ZN demonstrating that Zone 4 stations from the southern tier can compete effectively.

"Worst conditions ever." — K1LT

Call	Score
K3ZM	301,889
AA1K	292,536
N2MF	250,292
NA8V	248,332
WF2W	193,512
W5ZN	190,256
AB3CX	182,520
K1LT	155,034
W1RCR	142,630
W5MX	141,726

VE Single-Operator

Canadian operators delivered exceptional CW results, led by Vlad VE3JM with a dominant 379,998-point score — topping every U.S. single-op entry. VE3JM's Ontario location provides outstanding paths to both Europe and the continental U.S. simultaneously. VE3MGY (168,392) and VE3PN (117,572) gave Canada further strength in the standings.

Call	Score
VE3JM	379,998
VE3MGY	168,392
VE3PN	117,572
VY2WW	94,860
VE3KP	51,747
VE3DZ	49,635
VE3BR	47,128
VE6BBP	30,672
VA3FN	23,664
VE3UZ	16,038



Vlad VE3JM ran away with the top score in Canada on CW. Well done!

North America Single-Operator

Among non-Canadian North American CW operators, ZF5T from the Cayman Islands dominated with 703,608 points. NP2J, operated by K8RF from the U.S. Virgin Islands (176,541), and KP2M, operated by KT3Y (131,742), followed. XE2S from Mexico (15,732) and WP4WW from Puerto Rico (24) rounded out the non-Canadian Caribbean and Latin American representation.

Call	Score
ZF5T	703,608
NP2J	176,541
KP2M	131,742
XE2S	15,732
WP4WW	24

QRP Single-Operator

The CW QRP category produced some of the contest's most impressive feats. 4U1A led the worldwide standings with 169,125 points on just five watts, followed by Czech station OL1A (144,980) and Germany's DK7HA (102,864). These results are a testament to exceptional antenna systems and patient operating on the most challenging band in the contest.

"This was a very tough contest. Aurora ruined better results. I used phased verticals with elevated radials, along with a single vertical. For RX, I used 3 Beverage antennas and a K9AY." — 9A5M

Call	Score
4U1A	169,125
OL1A	144,980
DK7HA	102,864
OL4W	83,820
S53K	81,466
DM2X	75,510
OK1FKD	70,746
LY7Z	58,480
S53AR	49,881
HA8WZ	48,248

Low Power Single-Operator

Belgium's OP3T topped the worldwide CW Low Power standings with 210,694 points. VE3MGY (168,392) and Slovakia's OM2XA (164,671) followed, with LY4L from Lithuania (152,250) and OM5NL from Slovakia (118,800) making it a heavily European top five.

Call	Score
OP3T	210,694
VE3MGY	168,392
OM2XA	164,671
LY4L	152,250
OM5NL	118,800
TA3NE	116,150
S57K	111,264
DL6KWN	101,144
EW1SK	100,620
S57SU	96,068

W/VE Low Power

VE3MGY led the W/VE CW Low Power category with 168,392 points, well clear of N0NI (90,528). The results reflect the strength of Canadian low-power topband operators, who benefit from favorable propagation paths to both Europe and the U.S.

Call	Score
VE3MGY	168,392
N0NI	90,528
WD8DSB	50,615
VE3DZ	49,635
WR5O	43,456
WS9V	38,869
K7SV	38,301
N7IR	36,252
W5JMW	34,664
WB4MSG	26,904

W/VE QRP

N9SE paced the W/VE CW QRP standings with 40,749 points, ahead of N3CZ (24,024) and K4TO (23,460). Operating QRP on 160-meter CW demands extraordinary patience and skill — these scores reflect the best of both.

Call	Score
N9SE	40,749
N3CZ	24,024
K4TO	23,460
K4XL	18,532
N4GG	10,360
K0KT	8,268
W4FMM	7,614
N0JK	6,845
WA3LXD	6,150
K4PQC	2,240

CW — Single-Operator Assisted

World Single-Operator Assisted

Cyprus's C4E, operated by Andy LZ2HM/5B4AMX, topped the CW World assisted standings with 731,850 points, edging out PJ2T, operated by Jeff K8ND from Curaçao (675,688), and P40AA, operated by Mathais DL4MM from Aruba (630,123). Croatian stations 9A5M (605,495) and 9A4M (604,962) posted nearly identical scores — a remarkable coincidence reflecting the quality of Croatian topband operations.

Call	Score
C4E	731,850
PJ2T	675,688
P40AA	630,123
9A5M	605,495
9A4M	604,962
LY4A	586,688
MW5B	571,238
OM3GI	549,822
YT3X	529,344
OM2ADM	520,315

USA Single-Operator Assisted

Tom K1KI led the U.S. CW Assisted category with 295,106 points, followed by K1BX (201,875) and N1LN (198,628). The New England presence at the top of the U.S. assisted leaderboard reflects the region's propagation advantages for working Europe during the winter months.

Call	Score
K1KI	295,106
K1BX	201,875
N1LN	198,628
KB1EFS	182,895
NO9E	165,985
KV0Q	162,471
W1SJ	156,000
NN3Q	155,232
W8MJ	148,994
AA3B	148,819

VE Single-Operator Assisted

Victor VA2WA from Quebec dominated the VE CW Assisted field with 468,547 points — a score competitive among the world's elite operators. VE3EJ (309,204) followed in second, with VE3VN (139,318) a strong third.

Call	Score
VA2WA	468,547
VE3EJ	309,204
VE3VN	139,318
VE3VY	89,100
*VA3OKG	71,916
VE3MM	60,207
VE5MX	57,772
VA3TNM	52,492
VO2AC	51,129
*VA3WB	46,326

* = Low Power

NA Single-Operator Assisted

Among non-Canadian North American Assisted CW operators, XE2X from Mexico led the Low Power Assisted category with 140,118 points, followed by VP2M from Montserrat (61,745), XE2B (4,488), XE1L (3,528), HI3K from the Dominican Republic (3,100), and XE2OK (512). In the High Power Assisted category, V26OC from Antigua & Barbuda posted 16,150 points, with V31MA from Belize contributing 11,200.

Call	Score
V26OC	16,150
V31MA	11,200
*XE2X	140,118
*VP2M	61,745
*XE2B	4,488
*XE1L	3,528
*HI3K	3,100
*XE2OK	512

* = Low Power

Low Power Assisted

Poland's SP7AS led the worldwide CW Low Power Assisted category with 261,096 points, ahead of Czech Republic's OK2ZV (194,883) and SQ3R (189,718). Central European operators dominated this category with impressive depth throughout the standings.

Call	Score
*SP7AS	261,096
*OK2ZV	194,883
*SQ3R	189,718
*OK2BFN	176,130
*E79D	164,217
*HA8WY	157,080
*SN5J	148,461
*YO5AVN	147,420
*LZ2FU	145,754
*HA6NL	142,938

* = Low Power

W/VE Low Power Assisted

Ed K1EP (130,200) and N3HEE (93,870) led the W/VE CW Low Power Assisted standings, with Canadian VA3OKG (71,916) in third. Northeast locations again proved their value on Top Band.

Call	Score
*K1EP	130,200
*N3HEE	93,870
*VA3OKG	71,916

Call	Score
*N3AC	66,600
*NJ3K	66,420
*WO1N	52,032
*ND4Y	46,852
*VA3WB	46,326
*K0RC	42,126
*WB8JUI	41,652

* = Low Power

CW — Zone Highlights

Zone 3 — Pacific USA and Canada

Zone 3 operators face some of the toughest propagation challenges in the CW contest, with long paths to both Europe and the eastern U.S. Frank W8KA led the zone with 81,627 points, followed by N7IR (36,252) and N7GP (25,164).

Call	Score
W8KA	81,627
N7IR	36,252
N7GP	25,164
AA6AA	23,912
K6NA	16,677
N7RK	16,224
AC7A	11,480
N9BD	6,860
N6TQ	4,968
AA7V	3,562

Zone 4 — North America Interior

Zone 4 produced a highly competitive CW field topped by VE3JM's dominant 379,998-point score. NA8V (248,332), W5ZN (190,256), and VE3MGY (168,392) followed, making Zone 4 one of the deepest competitive zones in the CW contest.

Call	Score
VE3JM	379,998
NA8V	248,332
W5ZN	190,256
VE3MGY	168,392
K1LT	155,034
W5MX	141,726
K5KU	123,444
K0TT	120,123
VE3PN	117,572
N0TT	101,974

Zone 14 — Western & Northern Europe

G5W, operated by Don G3BJ, paced Zone 14 with 362,270 points in CW, ahead of LN8W, operated by Lech LA7MFA from Norway (342,224), and Belgium's OP3T, operated by Michel ON7EH (210,694). The Northern European stations benefit from excellent transatlantic paths on 160 meters.

Call	Score
G5W	362,270
LN8W	342,224
OP3T	210,694
SM2U	182,294
PC0A	158,290
DK8FD	146,664
DL6KWN	101,144
DK3BK	95,750
DL8ULF	93,420
G4BUO	86,955



Where are all the wires? This neat station belongs to Don G3BJ who operated G5W to #5 in the world on CW!

Zone 15 — Eastern Europe

Zone 15 was one of the most competitive zones in the CW contest. Slovenia's S53A, operated by S50A, led with 389,499 points, followed by Lithuania's LY5W (340,500), Serbia's YT9W (339,096), and Poland's SP4T, operated by IT9RGY (335,520). The depth of competition in Zone 15 was extraordinary, with ten stations all posting scores above 170,000 points.

Call	Score
S53A	389,499
LY5W	340,500
YT9W	339,096
SP4T	335,520
OM7K	318,849
OE8TED	285,056
YT8A	240,924
SP2LNW	183,315
S51DX	176,350
OM2XA	164,671

Zone 16 — Eastern Europe & Russia (West)

Igor R5WW claimed the Zone 16 CW crown with 174,812 points, ahead of EW1SK from Belarus (100,620) and R4GM (65,076).

Call	Score
R5WW	174,812
EW1SK	100,620
R4GM	65,076
ER5GB	64,680
UT3QU	62,730
UT5ECZ	48,552
R3FX	42,198
RM2U	40,584
UZ5ZV	35,853
UT5W	35,175

Russia Single-Operator

R5WW led all Russian CW single operators with 174,812 points unassisted. The Russian Assisted category was paced by RW7K (413,504) and R8TT (356,340), with RG2A (179,714) in third. R2FK (99,912) and UA9BA (65,345) were the next unassisted Russian operators.

Call	Score
R5WW	174,812
R2FK	99,912
UA9BA	65,345
R4GM	65,076
RZ9YI	57,708
R3FX	42,198
RM2U	40,584
RV1AW	34,125
RL3BZ	27,880
UA1CUR	25,604

CW — Multi-Operator

World Multi-Operator

The CW Multi-Op category produced the contest's most impressive single score, with IG9/S54W from Lampedusa Island — operated by S54W, S51V, S52OT, S53T, S53R, S56DX, S57UN, S58MU, S59A, S59ZZ, YT3H, and IG9ITO — posting a stunning 1,228,080 points to claim the world title by a wide margin. The fabulous zone 33 location's combination of paths to North America, Europe, and the Middle East proved decisive. OM7M from Slovakia, operated by OM2KI, OM2IB, OM5RW, and OM5ZW

(695,538) was a distant second, followed by HG8DX from Hungary, operated by HA8DJ, HA8DZ, HA8JV, and HA8KW (561,348), 9A5Y from Croatia (532,710), and OL1R from the Czech Republic, operated by OK1NY, OK1HGM, OK1MV, and OK1IW (511,100).

"A good team can still have fun even in less than perfect conditions." —

DM7C

“On the Monday before the race, a strong solar wind hit the Earth and a strong aurora borealis occurred. The first night there were 566 Qs in the log, of which over 50 DXs were W/VE/Carib/SA. We expected it to be much, much worse. The second night was miserable on DXs.” — **OL1R**

“Single 8m vertical, ATU at base. As luck would have it, a short sea trial coincided with CQ160 this year. We sailed between Japan and Korea — One Night Only.” — **WOODS/MM**

Call	Score
IG9/S54W	1,228,080
OM7M	695,538
HG8DX	561,348
9A5Y	532,710
OL1R	511,100
HB7X	500,619

Call	Score
II2Q	480,624
KP4AA	473,154
DM6M	469,030
OL3Z	443,880

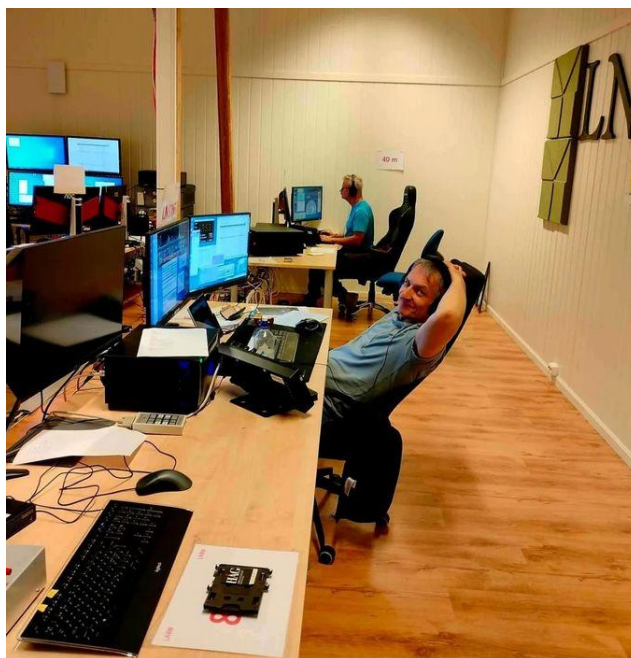


The crew from IG9/S54W (shown here in 2025), shows their enthusiasm for their winning efforts!

W/VE Multi-Operator

Krassy's superstation at K1LZ, operated by K1LZ and K3JO, led the W/VE CW Multi-Op standings with 381,808 points, ahead of N2AA, operated by W2GD, W2CG, W2NO, W2RQ, N2OO, KE2D, WW2Y, WC2K, N2HM and others (295,188), and K0DI (271,714). K3LR, operated by K3LR, K3UA, N3GJ, and N2NC (261,459), and N4WW, operated by W4WF and N4WW (253,240), completed a competitive top five.

Call	Score
K1LZ	381,808
N2AA	295,188
K0DI	271,714
K3LR	261,459
N4WW	253,240
W4NF	195,741
NN3W	185,180
K3AJ	139,672
W4RM	136,752
N4QS	123,600



Lech LA7MFA and Sven LA3BO at the beautiful LN8W superstation. Lech managed #6 in the world on CW!

SSB RESULTS

SSB — Single-Operator

World Single-Operator — Open

The SSB DX Single-Op category was led by Luxembourg's LX1NO with a remarkable 179,928-point score, demonstrating that Western European stations with top-notch antenna systems can dominate the SSB low-band competition. Russia's UA7K (158,168) came in second, followed by Poland's SP4T, operated by IT9RGY (151,278), Serbia's YT9W (139,838), and Poland's SN7D, operated by SQ7D (138,112). The European concentration at the top of the SSB DX standings underscores how propagation on 160 SSB favors the shorter, lower-noise paths of the continent.

Call	Score
LX1NO	179,928
UA7K	158,168
SP4T	151,278
YT9W	139,838
SN7D	138,112
IB8A	122,400
PC0A	109,172
YT8A	90,428
UZ7C	85,330
OM7K	80,740

"We think these were the worst conditions we've ever experienced on 160m. Even local stations were incredibly weak, making it impossible to build up a good QSO total. Propagation to NA was at a bare minimum, but every call and contact was very much appreciated!" — E17M

"When the sun was very active before the CW part, we were looking forward to SSB, where it should be better. The first hour was good with a nice rate of EU callers. The rest of the time went very slow. Probably nobody remembers such bad conditions since the last solar maximum. We had a feel like 'Peeing against the solar wind.'" — OL1R



No it's not K1ZM, but his brother Peter K3ZM. The ZM legend continues on 160M with Peter taking top USA on both modes!

USA Single-Operator

Peter K3ZM claimed the top U.S. SSB score with 124,080 points, becoming the only operator to win their respective U.S. category in both CW and SSB — a remarkable double. ND8DX (111,987) was close behind, followed by WF2W (87,318), W5MX (69,564), and W3LL (54,855). The SSB scores are naturally lower than CW, reflecting the additional challenge of voice operation on 160 meters, but the competition was no less fierce.

“Well we all complained about conditions last year... HA!! Guess last year's conditions weren't that bad after all. The highlights of this year's effort was being the FIRST 160M QSO ever for two ops. I hope they got hooked on 160 and contesting.” — ND8DX

Call	Score
K3ZM	124,080
ND8DX	111,987
WF2W	87,318
W5MX	69,564
W3LL	54,855
W3TS	53,240
NA8V	53,100
KE2AY	37,840
AF1T	36,800
N8CWU	35,512



Here is Jon AA1K, one of the most famous top band operators of all time at his FB Delaware station.

VE Single-Operator

Congratulations to newcomer Connie VE3KEM, who topped the Canadian SSB standings with an impressive 112,050 points, leading a strong Ontario contingent that also included VE3MGY (88,272) and VE3PN (80,250). The depth of Canadian SSB participation on Top Band continues to impress year over year.

Call	Score
VE3KEM	112,050
VE3MGY	88,272
VE3PN	80,250
VE3UZ	44,310
VE3ZV	15,732
VA3AC	13,284
VA3AR	12,663
VE3KMQ	7,942
VE3MHA	3,870
VA7MM	3,136

North America Single-Operator

Among non-Canadian North American SSB operators, Costa Rica's TI1K, operated by Charlie TI5CDA, led with 55,755 points, followed by KP4AA from Puerto Rico (37,995), CO2XN from Cuba (4,320), and WP4I from Puerto Rico (30). Caribbean and Latin American stations provided all the non-Canadian representation in this category.

Call	Score
TI1K	55,755
KP4AA	37,995
CO2XN	4,320
WP4I	30

QRP Single-Operator

Serhii UR3ABV led the SSB QRP category with 31,317 points — a superb achievement operating voice at QRP power on 160 meters. Lithuania's LY7Z (21,648) and Germany's DK2LO (19,958) followed. SSB QRP on Top Band is arguably the most challenging operating style in the entire contest, and these results deserve special recognition.

“Unfortunately, the contest had to be interrupted due to the outbreak of war. It was impossible to continue due to constant shelling from Iran.” — 4Z1MS

“Due to very strong broadband interference, I conducted the entire contest using a small magnetic listening antenna. I missed a few QSOs because they were too weak. I hope I still have the energy to participate next year — it will be 70 years, and the night between Saturday and Sunday is getting harder and harder.” — HB9CXZ

Call	Score
UR3ABV	31,317
LY7Z	21,648
DK2LO	19,958
DL8LR	14,993
DM2X	9,698
OE3MDB	6,600
YO8WW	6,417
TA1ED	4,935
K2PI	3,473
UR5FEO	2,618

Low Power Single-Operator

Dusan YT8A led the worldwide SSB Low Power standings with 90,428 points, followed by Canada's VE3MGY (88,272) and Ukraine's UZ7C (85,330). The international flavor of the SSB low-power category reflects the broad appeal of 160-meter SSB contesting across the globe.

Call	Score
YT8A	90,428
VE3MGY	88,272
UZ7C	85,330
OK1LRD	72,120
HA8WY	66,654
YO2LIM	56,200
DL0NG	48,321
IU1NKS	46,371
S50SL	46,172
M2X	45,288

W/VE Low Power

VE3MGY topped the W/VE SSB Low Power category with 88,272 points, nearly tripling the score of second-place N1UR (27,864). The category saw strong participation from both sides of the border, with Canadian and U.S. operators trading positions throughout the standings.

Call	Score
VE3MGY	88,272
N1UR	27,864
WB4MSG	23,672
N8YEL	22,455
K1EP	20,622
W1TKO	19,608
VE3ZV	15,732
WR9L	14,532
KR4OW	14,040
AA4LR	13,631

W/VE QRP

W/VE SSB QRP participation was modest but spirited. K2PI led with 3,473 points, followed by W4FMM (2,304) and WA1BXY (1,760). Every QSO earned in this category represents a genuine achievement on the most challenging combination of mode and band in amateur radio contesting.

Call	Score
K2PI	3,473
W4FMM	2,304
WA1BXY	1,760
VE3BR	1,455
WA3LXD	825
K3TW	630
WG5F	310
W7LG	91
WE9N	18

SSB — Single-Operator Assisted

World Single-Operator Assisted

Slovakia's OM7M, operated by Alex UR5AS, topped the SSB worldwide Assisted standings with 297,374 points, edging out Rolandas LY4A (289,710) and Cyprus's C4E, operated by Andy 5B4AMX (234,669). Serbia's YT3L (223,284) and Slovenia's S56B (157,575) rounded out the top five, with European stations dominating the SSB assisted leaderboard.

Call	Score
OM7M	297,374
LY4A	289,710
C4E	234,669
YT3L	223,284
S56B	157,575
3V8LL	139,440
S56X	138,348
EU4E	116,448
HB9CXZ	113,022
N0GJW	108,697

USA Single-Operator Assisted

Gawain N0GJW led the U.S. SSB Assisted category with 108,697 points, ahead of NO9E (56,340) and KV0Q (49,860). The U.S. SSB assisted results show broad geographic participation, with operators from across the country posting competitive scores.

Call	Score
N0GJW	108,697
NO9E	56,340
KV0Q	49,860
K4ISV	44,004
N3ZV	35,598
K0IDX	35,448
*WE9R	33,614
N2HMM	29,084
AA2MU	26,790
W2CG	26,273

* = Low Power

VE Single-Operator Assisted

VE3VY led the Canadian SSB Assisted standings with 70,462 points, followed by VE9XX (29,026) and VA2AM (17,395). The VE Assisted SSB category showed participation from across the country, from the Maritimes to British Columbia.

Call	Score
VE3VY	70,462
VE9XX	29,026
VA2AM	17,395
*VE3EJ	16,286
VE7ZO	5,950
VO2AC	3,759
VA7KK	1,133
VE3JZT	984
*VE9RLW	869
VA7UI	66

* = Low Power

Low Power Assisted

Croatia's 9A3B operated by 9A2VR and Germany's DR2T operated by DL9OBD were neck-and-neck at the top of the SSB Low Power Assisted standings with 95,910 and 95,264 points respectively. Sam LY5W (94,799) was close behind in third, making the top of the category one of the tightest races in the entire contest.

Call	Score
*9A3B	95,910
*DR2T	95,264
*LY5W	94,799
*OK4R	81,303
*LX5M	67,628
*OZ1ADL	57,440
*JA3BL	53,406
*OK2BFN	46,240
*S52ON	42,328
*SP7M	40,720

* = Low Power

W/VE Low Power Assisted

Lyle WE9R led the W/VE SSB Low Power Assisted category with 33,614 points, ahead of KC9LA (20,520) and K5TD (17,802). VE3EJ (16,286) was the top Canadian entry in the category.

Call	Score
*WE9R	33,614
*KC9LA	20,520
*K5TD	17,802
*VE3EJ	16,286
*KW4SW	14,382
*WO1N	10,857
*NS3T	10,050
*KI1P	6,840
*N1ZYZ	5,580
*KD9YOO	5,394

* = Low Power

SSB — Zone Highlights

Zone 3 — Pacific USA and Canada

Zone 3 SSB entries faced their usual propagation challenges. K6RAD led the zone with 5,076 points, followed by AD7XG (3,450) and VA7MM (3,136). The relatively modest scores from Zone 3 are a reflection of the long paths that west coast operators must overcome on 160-meter SSB.

Call	Score
K6RAD	5,076
AD7XG	3,450
VA7MM	3,136
N6XI	1,800
N7RK	1,672
KK7UIA	1,078
AD6WL	855
K6NR	504
KC7V	372
N7IR	234

Zone 4 — North America Interior

Zone 4 produced a competitive SSB field, with VE3KEM (112,050) and ND8DX (111,987) virtually tied at the top. VE3MGY (88,272), VE3PN (80,250), and W5MX (69,564) followed in another strong showing from Ontario-based operators.

Call	Score
VE3KEM	112,050
ND8DX	111,987
VE3MGY	88,272
VE3PN	80,250
W5MX	69,564
NA8V	53,100
VE3UZ	44,310
N8CWU	35,512
WA8RCN	27,278
N8OL	27,016

Zone 14 — Western & Northern Europe

LX1NO dominated Zone 14 SSB with 179,928 points — the top DX SSB score overall. The Netherlands' PC0A (109,172) was second, followed by DL1SDX (52,849), DH1UK (48,888), and DL0NG, operated by DK8NC (48,321) from Germany.

Call	Score
LX1NO	179,928
PC0A	109,172
DL1SDX	52,849
DH1UK	48,888
DL0NG	48,321
M2X	45,288
G0CNN	42,256
DJ1WF	39,780
DK1IJ	38,184
EA3LA	33,984

Zone 15 — Eastern Europe

Zone 15 was again the most competitive zone in the SSB contest, led by Poland's SP4T, operated by Gabry IT9RGY (151,278), and Serbia's YT9W (139,838). Poland's SN7D, operated by SQ7D (138,112), and Italy's IB8A, operated by W1NA (122,400), gave the zone remarkable international depth. Ten stations in Zone 15 posted scores above 46,000 points.

Call	Score
SP4T	151,278
YT9W	139,838
SN7D	138,112
IB8A	122,400
YT8A	90,428
OM7K	80,740
OK4U	74,347
OK1LRD	72,120
OM6AL	68,288
HA8WY	66,654

Zone 16 — Eastern Europe & Russia (West)

Alex UA7K led Zone 16 SSB with 158,168 points, a substantial margin ahead of UZ7C, operated by UT9CZ (85,330), and US6EX (41,888). UA7K's score was also the second-highest DX SSB score in the entire contest.

Call	Score
UA7K	158,168
UZ7C	85,330
US6EX	41,888
RK3E	23,400
UY4W	22,568
RC6N	14,210
RC5Z	12,035
EU4SL	11,556
UW1U	10,114
EW8DX	5,420

Russia Single-Operator

UA7K dominated the Russian SSB single-operator standings with 158,168 points — also the top Russian score by a wide margin. RK3E (23,400) and RX9CAZ (22,680) followed. In the Russian Assisted category, R1DX (59,355) and R2FC (56,170) led after UA7K.

Call	Score
UA7K	158,168
RK3E	23,400
RX9CAZ	22,680
UA9BA	19,845
RC6N	14,210
RC5Z	12,035
R7AM	5,220
RK6OQ	5,160
RZ9YN	4,912
R4MM	4,617

SSB — Multi-Operator

World Multi-Operator

Perennial multi op station HG8DX, operated by HA8DZ and HA8KW, topped the SSB Multi-Op category with 280,136 points, followed by Ireland's EI7M, operated by EI3DP, EI3JE, EI3JZ, EI5GSB, EI5IYB, EI6IKB, EI3KD, and EI8IR (257,742), and Czech Republic's OL1R, operated by OK1NY, OK1MV, OK1HGM, and OK2MTW (218,394). Poland's SP8R, operated by SP7VC, SP8N, and SQ8JLA (205,758), and Romania's YR8D, operated by YO3IMD, YO3XX, YO4RIU, and YO8TTT (178,582), completed the top five.

“After a break of many years there was enough renewed interest to do a Multi-op entry this year. Conditions were not too bad on the first evening with lots of NA stations worked, but not as good on the second night — we could hear many in NA that just could not hear us and it was very slow.” —
EI7M

“On the first night, unfortunately, we lost the 320m Beverage antenna in the JA direction when a young man ran over the wire with his car on the airport runway. The next day we were looking for pieces of wire on the runway and reconnecting them.” —
OL1R

Call	Score
HG8DX	280,136
EI7M	257,742
OL1R	218,394
SP8R	205,758
YR8D	178,582
N2CEI	154,615
LZ5R	149,890
K1LZ	137,530
DP6A	131,656
E7CW	117,260

W/VE Multi-Operator

Steve's fine FL station at N2CEI, operated by K4SME, K0DI, and N2CEI, led the W/VE SSB Multi-Op category with 154,615 points, ahead of K1LZ, operated by K1LZ and K3JO (137,530). N7A, operated by KY7M, N7NR, and W7JET (42,334), K3TS, operated by K3TS and N4NYY (38,792), and N3DPB, operated by N3DPB, KB3VQC, K0OO, W1TRT, KJ5BIN, and WA3EKL (37,850), filled out the next tier.

Call	Score
N2CEI	154,615
K1LZ	137,530
N7A	42,334
K3TS	38,792
N3DPB	37,850
W8MO	31,950
W8UCO	30,691
N1DE	18,480
W5SGL	13,801
KI4KWR	4,004



The crew at KP5/NP3VI set up their remote station on Desecheo Island, making a lot of people happy with an ATNO on 160!

Back-to-Back Plaque Winners: 2025 and 2026

The following operators and stations claimed plaque wins in both the 2025 and 2026 CQ 160-Meter Contests — a remarkable achievement reflecting consistent excellence on Top Band. Notably, Andy Sachkov LZ2HM/5B4AMX won the CW World Assisted category in 2025 as P33W

and again in 2026 as C4E, and also repeated as SSB Asia Assisted winner under different callsigns.

Category	2025 Winner	2026 Winner
World Multi-Op Combined SSB/CW	HG8DX	HG8DX
CW USA Single Operator	K3ZM (Peter Briggs)	K3ZM (Peter Briggs)
CW Canada Single Operator	VE3JM (Vlad Milutinovic)	VE3JM (Vlad Milutinovic)
CW USA Zone 3	W8KA (Frank Fusari)	W8KA (Frank Fusari)
CW USA Zone 4	NA8V (Greg Chapoton)	NA8V (Greg Chapoton)
CW South America	P40AA (Mathias Kolpe DL4MM)	P40AA (Mathias Kolpe DL4MM)
CW Japan	JH4UYB (Masaki Okano)	JH4UYB (Masaki Okano)
CW World Assisted	P33W (Andrey Sachkov LZ2HM)	C4E (Andrey Sachkov 5B4AMX)
CW USA Zone 3 Assisted	K7NJ (Riki Kline)	K7NJ (Riki Kline)
CW Canada Low Power	VE3MGY (Brian Campbell)	VE3MGY (Brian Campbell)
CW USA Multi-Operator	K1LZ	K1LZ

Category	2025 Winner	2026 Winner
CW Europe Multi-Operator	OM7M	OM7M
CW Zone 16 Multi-Operator	RL3A	RL3A
SSB Asia Assisted	H25A (Andrey Sachkov LZ2HM)	C4E (Andrey Sachkov 5B4AMX)

2026 CQ 160M Plaque Winners and Donors

* Denotes awarded to runner-up in category

Combined SSB/CW

World Single Operator

SP4T (opr. Gabry Iuliani IT9RGY)

Donor: Ed Parish, K1EP

Single Operator Low Power — Single-element antennas ≤50 ft

SN5J (opr. Jan Czerwinski)

Donor: Gene Gabry, N9TF

World Multi-Operator

HG8DX (Oprs.: HA8DZ HA8KW HA8DJ HA8JV)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

CW — Single Operator

World

CQ9A (opr. Igor Buklan RA3AUU)

Donor: DJ8WL Memorial by Bill Tippett, W4ZV

Canada

VE3JM (opr. Vlad Milutinovic)

Donor: Mike Wetzel, W9RE

U.S.A. — Zone 4

NA8V (opr. Greg Chapoton)

Donor: Steve Schmidt, K4WA

Africa

3V8LL (opr. Giovanni Chiappisi)

Donor: James "Skip" Riba, WS9V, and Christy Tapp, KD9GKL

Asiatic Russia

UA9BA (opr. Vladimir Umanets)

Donor: Steve "Sid" Caesar — NH7C

European Russia

R5WW (opr. Igor Plugatarev)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

North America

ZF5T (opr. Stan Stockton)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

U.S.A.

K3ZM (opr. Peter Briggs)

Donor: Milt Jensen, N5IA, Memorial by Arizona Outlaws Contest Club

U.S.A. — Zone 3

W8KA (opr. Frank Fusari)

Donor: Boring Amateur Radio Club

U.S.A. — Zone 5

AA1K (opr. Jon Zaimes)

Donor: Tim Duffy, K3LR, and Sandy Raeker, N0QQ

Asia

4X7M (opr. Alexander Krayzman 4Z4AK)

Donor: Nodir Tursoon-Zadeh, EY8MM

Europe

S53A (opr. Tine Brajnik S50A)

Donor: Emir-Braco Memic, E77DX

Japan

JH4UYB (opr. Masaki Okano)

Donor: Alabama Contest Group

Oceania

VK2GR (opr. Allan Mason)

Donor: Steve "Sid" Caesar — NH7C

South America

P40AA (opr. Mathias Kolpe DL4MM)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

Southern Hemisphere

PP5JR (opr. Sergio Lima de Almeida)

Donor: Robert Kile, W7RH

CW — Single Operator Assisted

World

C4E (opr. Andrey Sachkov 5B4AMX)

Donor: Andy Chesnokov, UA3AB

Asia

R8TT (opr. Sergey Moskaev)

Donor: Jon Zaimes, AA1K

U.S.A.

K1KI (opr. Tom Frenaye)

Donor: Akito Nagi, JA5DQH

U.S.A. — Zone 4

KV0Q (opr. Bill Johnson)

Donor: Pete Michaelis, N8TR

World Low Power

SP7AS (opr. Alex)

Donor: Jon Zaimes, AA1K

Europe

9A5M (opr. Marin Brdar)

Donor: Bill Salyers, AJ8B

U.S.A. — Zone 3

K7NJ (opr. Riki Kline)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

U.S.A. — Zone 5

K1BX (opr. Art Hambleton)

Donor: Potomac Valley Radio Club

CW — Single Operator Low Power

World

OP3T (opr. Michel Spelier ON7EH)

Donor: Akito Nagi, JA5DQH

Canada

VE3MGY (opr. Brian Campbell)

Donor: Contest Club Ontario

Europe

OM2XA (opr. Juraj Neupauer)

Donor: DL1RK Memorial by Petr Ourednik, OK1RP

U.S.A.

N0NI (opr. Toni Radebaugh)

Donor: Ed Parish, K1EP

Asia

TA3NE (opr. Husamettin)

Donor: Robert Kile, W7RH

CW — Single Operator QRP

World

4U1A (opr. Andrejs Pankins YL2QN)

Donor: Valentin Benzar, EU1AA, Memorial by R3XA

Europe

OL1A (opr. Vlada Sladek)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

Zone 5

N3CZ (opr. Vlado Karamitrov)

Donor: Ed Parish, K1EP

U.S.A.

N9SE (opr. Marty Ray)

Donor: Bruce Draper, AA5B Memorial by Ray Sokola, K9RS

Zone 4

K4TO (opr. Dave Sublette)

Donor: Brent Scott, WR5O

CW — Multi-Operator

World

IG9/S54W (Oprs.: S54W S51V S52OT S53T S53R S56DX S57UN S58MU S59A S59ZZ YT3H IG9ITO)

Donor: Paul Newberry, N4PN Memorial by N4RJ

U.S.A.

K1LZ (Oprs.: K1LZ K3JO)

Donor: W0CD and W8UVZ Memorial by K8GG

Europe

OM7M (Oprs.: OM2KI OM2IB OM5RW OM5ZW)

Donor: Bob Evans, K5WA

North America

KP4AA (Oprs.: KP4AA W2XX)

Donor: Big Gun Contest Club, W2AA

Asia

RD8D (Oprs.: RX9CAZ R8FF RV9CDW)

Donor: Tom Whitted, N7GP

Zone 16

RL3A (Oprs.: R2BW R3DCX RL3FT RX3APM RL5D RK9UE)

Donor: John Crovelli, W2GD

SSB — Single Operator

World

LX1NO (opr. Norby Oberweis)

Donor: Nodir Tursoon-Zadeh, EY8MM

Canada

VE3KEM (opr. Connie Jancik)

Donor: Tom Haavisto, VE3CX

U.S.A. — Zone 4

ND8DX (opr. Karl Brandt)

Donor: Alabama Contest Group

Africa

EA8A (opr. Luis de la Rosa)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

Asiatic Russia

RX9CAZ (opr. Andy Potemkin)

Donor: Steve "Sid" Caesar — NH7C

European Russia

UA7K (opr. Alex Kotovsky)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

Oceania

YB2DX (opr. Yohanes Budhiono)

Donor: Steve "Sid" Caesar — NH7C

Southern Hemisphere

PP5JR (opr. Sergio Lima de Almeida)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

U.S.A.

K3ZM (opr. Peter Briggs)

Donor: Scott Wright, K0MD

U.S.A. — Zone 3

K6RAD (opr. Kurk Radford)

Donor: Nate Moreschi, N4YDU

U.S.A. — Zone 5

WF2W (opr. John Slusser)

Donor: Bob Evans, K5WA

Asia

TA3NE (opr. Husamettin)

Donor: CQ 160M Contest Committee

Europe

SP4T (opr. Gabry Iuliani IT9RGY)

Donor: James "Skip" Riba, WS9V, and Christy Tapp, KD9GKL

North America

TI1K (opr. Charlie Azofeifa TI5CDA)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

South America

HD8R (opr. Manu Siebert LU9ESD)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

SSB — Single Operator Assisted

World

OM7M (opr. Martin Znasik UR5AS)

Donor: K9HMB Memorial by Ray Sokola, K9RS

Europe

LY4A (opr. Rolandas Jokubauskas)

Donor: Curtis Rose, N2ZX

U.S.A.

N0GJW (opr. Gawain Williams)

Donor: Pete Michaelis, N8TR

Asia

C4E (opr. Andrey Sachkov 5B4AMX)

Donor: Chuck Dietz, W5PR

Europe Low Power

9A3B (opr. Bozidar Babic 9A2VR)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

Zone 4

KV0Q (opr. Bill Johnson)

Donor: Pete Michaelis, N8TR

SSB — Single Operator Low Power

World

YT8A (opr. Dusan Ceha)

Donor: Steve Molo, KI4KWR

Canada

VE3MGY (opr. Brian Campbell)

Donor: Rudy Bakalov, N2WQ

U.S.A.

N1UR (opr. Ed Sawyer)

Donor: Tim Duffy, K3LR, and Sandy Raeker, N0QQ

Europe

UZ7C (opr. Yuri Prokhorov UT9CZ)

Donor: Contest Club Ontario

SSB — Single Operator QRP

World

UR3ABV (opr. Serhii Mitsai)

Donor: John Rodgers, WE3C

SSB — Multi-Operator

World

HG8DX (Oprs.: HA8DZ HA8KW)

Donor: Rev. Paul Bittner, W0AIH Memorial by WB9Z and NV9L

U.S.A. — Zone 3

N7A (Oprs.: KY7M N7NR W7JET)

Donor: Paulo, PV8DX

Zone 16

EW2ZC (Oprs.: EW2ABB EU1W)

Donor: Valery Zhitkovic, EW6W

U.S.A.

N2CEI (Oprs.: K4SME K0DI N2CEI)

Donor: Jerry Rosalius, WB9Z and Val Hotzfeld, NV9L

Europe

EI7M (Oprs.: EI3DP EI3JE EI3JZ EI5GSB

EI5IYB EI6IKB EI3KD EI8IR)

Donor: South Jersey DX Association, N2CW

New Records

Despite the challenging propagation conditions, 2026 produced a number of new score records across both modes. The CW contest yielded 18 new records spanning entities from Desecheo Island to New Caledonia, while the SSB contest produced 10 new records. Records are listed by

geographic level — World, Continent, and Entity — and are only listed once at the highest applicable level.

New CW Records

Entity	Category	Callsign (Op)	Score	QSOs	Zones	Countries
(World)	Single-Op Low	W00DS/MM	800	20	0	4
3V — Tunisia	Assisted High	3V8LL	119,750	241	0	50
4L — Georgia	Single-Op QRP	4L5P	32,828	115	0	29
9Y — Trinidad & Tobago	Single-Op Low	9Y4I	140	4	0	4
DU — Philippines	Single-Op QRP	DU9GT	2	1	0	1
FK — New Caledonia	Single-Op High	FK8IK	120	8	0	3
HK — Colombia	Assisted Low	HK6J	2,380	18	10	4
HZ — Saudi Arabia	Assisted Low	7Z1SJ	23,520	85	0	28
KP5 — Desecheo Island	Multi-Op	KP5/NP3VI (XQ3SK NP4G HI3R AD5A NP3A KP3N WP4TZ)	990	16	3	6
LX — Luxembourg	Single-Op QRP	LX1NO	11,546	100	0	23
OY — Faroe Islands	Assisted Low	OY1CT	9,925	79	0	25
V2 — Antigua & Barbuda	Assisted High	V26OC (N3OC)	16,150	82	30	8
VP2M — Montserrat	Assisted Low	VP2M (VP2MAA)	61,745	229	42	11
VU — India	Multi-Op	VU2OY (VU2OY VU3HPF VU2TT)	1,287	14	0	11
W6 — United States	Assisted Low	WQ6X	13,948	135	37	7
XE — Mexico	Assisted Low	XE2X	140,118	417	50	16
Z3 — Macedonia	Assisted Low	Z32TO	79,965	349	0	45
ZS — South Africa	Assisted High	ZS1C	30	2	0	2

New SSB Records

Entity	Category	Callsign (Op)	Score	QSOs	W/VE	Countries
3V — Tunisia	Assisted High	3V8LL	139,440	291	2	46
ER — Moldova	Assisted Low	ER3UA	17,160	110	0	30
F — France	Assisted Low	F1TRE	5,760	46	0	24
HC8 — Galapagos Islands	Single-Op High	HD8R (LU9ESD)	64,800	109	42	18
LX — Luxembourg	Assisted Low	LX5M (LX1ER)	67,628	304	2	42
LY — Lithuania	Single-Op QRP	LY7Z	21,648	134	0	33
OZ — Denmark	Assisted Low	OZ1ADL	57,440	285	0	40
P4 — Aruba	Assisted High	P44W (W2GD)	57,044	113	32	20
TA — Turkey	Single-Op High	TA3NE	71,526	186	0	39
YU — Serbia	Assisted High	YT3L	223,284	619	12	57

Final Thoughts

In closing, special thanks to all the volunteers who help make the contest a success, including N6TR (log checking), K1DG (trophies), and K5ZD (webmaster).

Every year we depend on self-policing to help adjudicate the contest. This year was no exception. While there were no disqualifications, scores were adjusted where appropriate. Warning letters were sent to many stations as well.

Certificates for everyone are available for download from the website at CQ160.com.

All Log Checking reports have been mailed to the email address in your Cabrillo Log. If you did not receive it, please contact us at Director@CQ160.com.

Trophies will be mailed shortly.

Remember all CQ Contests have a 5-day deadline for submitting logs. Check out the rules on CQ160.com for the latest information.

Thanks to all for participating and see you in 2027! Conditions can only get better as Cycle 25 approaches the minimum. Hoping for much better propagation next year!

73, Andy N2NT

Director, CQ 160-Meter Contest