

Making Field Day Contacts with Packet

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1 Field Day Keyboard Contacts

For Field Day, there are a few things we can do with Packet Radio: Keyboard contacts, passing NTS messages, and passing ICS213 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.

1.1 Keyboard-to-Keyboard Frequencies

In my area, the Northern California Packet Association (NCPA) lists these simplex frequencies where keyboard-to-keyboard packet is usually found. Check with your local packet band planning organization for your frequencies.

6 meters: 50.62

2 meters: 144.350, 145.030, 145,050

220: 223.52

440: 433.510, 433.530

Reference

NCPA Band Plan: https://ncpa.n0ary.org/bandplan/digital-db.php

1.2 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></call_sign>	Connects you to the named station	
		Example:	
		cmd: c kn6pe connects to KN6PE's keyboard for chatting	
		cmd: c k6fb-2 connects to the Las Cumbres ARC PBBS	
Control C	<cntl-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		Disconnects you from the station to which you are connected.	
Monitor Mon [ON OFF] Displays or turns monitor on or 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.	

1.3 Steps

Setting up your TNC

Step			You type
1.	Tu	rn on your TNC, start your terminal	cmd:
	pro	ogram, and verify you can get to the	
	ΤN	C Prompt.	
2.	2. Reset your TNC to put it in a known		cmd: intface term
	sta	te. There are some setup commands	INTFACE was TERMINAL
		perform:	cmd: xmitlvl
	a.	intface term: confirms your TNC is	XMITLVL was 60
	u.	•	cmd:restore default
		in expert mode.	€€€€€€€€€xü€À€x<ðxàxÀ_x<€€€x<_æ€~€_3~~_
	b.	<u>xmitlvl</u> : retrieves the transmit level	PRESS (*) TO SET BAUD RATE
		setting. Note this number.	ENTER YOUR CALLSIGN=> kn6pe
	c.	restore default: performs a hard	KANTRONICS KPC3PMX VERSION 9.0N
	-	reset.	(C) COPYRIGHT 2002-2003 BY KANTRONICS
			INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
	d.	Press * when you can read the text.	DUPLICATION PROHIBITED WITHOUT
	e.	Enter your call sign.	PERMISSION OF KANTRONICS.
	f.	intface term: put your TNC back in	cmd: intface term
		expert mode.	INTFACE was NEWUSER
	σ	xmitlvl ###: reset the transmit level.	cmd: xmitlvl 60
	g.	AIIILIVI ###. Teset the transmit level.	XMITLVL was 100
			cmd:

Calling CQ

	- 0 - 7			
3.	Set your TNC in for CQ.	cmd: Unproto CQ		
4.	Turn Monitor on.	cmd: <u>mon on</u>		
5.	To call CQ, you must get into the	cmd: conv		
	Convers Mode.			
	NOTE: Everything you type will be			
	transmitted after you press Enter.			
6.	Transmit a CQ to let people know you	CQ CQ CQ Field Day KN6PE <cr></cr>		
	are there.			
7.	Interested individuals may connect to	Reply with your information		
	you and complete the exchange, or just			
	chat back to you in converse mode.			
8.	Log the contact.			

Answering a CQ, chat mode

Chat (UNCONNECTED) mode is when you just type and everything gets transmitted. In this mode, there is no guarantee that the recipient will get your message.

9. Put your TNC into converse mode:	cmd:conv <cr></cr>
10. When you see a station calling CQ, just type their call, your call, and your exchange. For instance:	<pre><their_call>, this is <your call="">, 1D SCV<cr></cr></your></their_call></pre>
11. Make sure they reply and state your call sign and their exchange information	
12. Log the contact.	
13. Put your TNC into command mode when done.	<pre><cntl-c></cntl-c></pre>

Answering a CQ, connect mode

Connect mode connects to another station. Your message will be delivered even if there are retries because the frequency is busy.

Step	You type
14. Put your TNC into command mode:	<cntl-c></cntl-c>
15. When you see a station calling CQ,	cmd: c KI6LDM <cr> (example)</cr>
connect to their call. Wait for the TNC	
to reply that you are connected	***CONNECTED ***
16. State your call and your exchange.	This is KN6PE, 1D SCV, copy? <cr></cr>
	(they should reply with something similar)
	Thanks! Good luck with the contest!
17. Disconnect from that station.	<cntl-c></cntl-c>
	d <cr></cr>
18. Log the contact.	
19. If you want to do more, repeat! Go back	cmd: conv
to Step 5 above.	

1.4 Example – Chat Mode

KN6PE calls CQ in chat mode	AI6CC answers in chat mode
Mon on	Mon on
Unproto CQ	
conv	
CQ CQ CQ Field Day, KN6PE	conv
	KN6PE this is AI6CC 1D SCV, copy?
AI6CC this is KN6PE, copy, I am also	
1D SCV	Copy, good luck with the contest!
Same to you	
CQ CQ CQ Field Day, KN6PE	

1.5 Example – Connect Mode

KN6PE call CQ in chat mode	AI6CC answers in connect mode
Mon on	Mon on
Unproto CQ	
conv	
CQ CQ CQ Field Day, KN6PE	
	cmd: c kn6pe
***CONNECTED TO AI6CC (TNC connect msg)	***CONNECTED *** (TNC connect msg)
	Please copy 1D SCV
Copy. I am also 1D SCV	
	Thanks, 73
	<cntl-c></cntl-c>
	d
*** DISCONNECTED	*** DISCONNECTED
CQ CQ CQ Field Day, KN6PE	

Hints

- 1. Consider creating a text file with some standard text replies. Then, you can just copy and paste it into the Ipserial program to speed your contact.
- 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.

Have fun with Packet and Field Day!