

ARRL ARDF Coordinator

Report to the ARRL Board of Directors

July 2018

To the Board of Directors:

This report of the ARRL Amateur Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) Coordinator to the ARRL Board of Directors covers the period January 9, 2017 to July 15, 2018.

Introduction and Purpose

As defined by the Terms of Reference document of the International Amateur Radio Union (IARU) Region 1 ARDF Working Group, "ARDF is a technical sport activity within the framework of the amateur service. It deals with the taking of radio bearings and finding hidden transmitters, constructing relevant equipment, and the training of amateurs involved in and with the organizing of relevant sport and social events."

The purpose of the national ARDF Coordinator position is to promote the development of this sport within the country and to work with ARDF Coordinators of other IARU countries to organize ARDF events and activities. The focus is on international-rules on-foot foxhunting (also called foxtailing and radio-orienteering), but not mobile hidden transmitter hunting.

USA ARDF Championships 2018

The Eighteenth USA ARDF Championships took place in the Tahoe National Forest of California from June 13 - 17, 2018. Courses were set in the woods near Little Truckee Summit at 6400 feet elevation, north of the town of Truckee. Competitors utilized an excellent orienteering map provided by Bay Area Orienteering Club.

The five days of ARDF activities began with a practice day on Wednesday, June 13. Foxoring and sprint competition days were Thursday and Friday, followed by classic two-meter and 80-meter competitions on the weekend. Awards were presented at a group dinner on Saturday night and also on Sunday after the final competition.

As always, the USA ARDF Championships were open to anyone at any ARDF skill level. Medals were awarded in IARU's six age categories for males and five categories for females.

Photos and results of these championships have been posted at <http://www.homingin.com>.

IARU ARDF World Championships 2018

The 18th IARU ARDF World Championships will take place near Sokcho, Korea from September 2 - 8, 2018. For the eleventh time, a delegation of radio-orientees will represent ARRL at the World Championships. There will be separate events on separate days for each competitor on eighty meters and two meters, each with up to five transmitters scattered in a large forested area. In addition, there will be sprint and foxoring competitions. Medals will be awarded to the best individuals and national teams in each age/gender category.

Each IARU society is invited send up to three competitors in each age/gender category. Team members are responsible for their own registration/room/board fees and for transportation expenses to and from Korea. Thanks to ARRL CFO Diane Middleton for executing the currency exchange and advance transfer of entry fees to the organizers.

Invitations to join Team USA 2018 were issued in late June, based on performances and standings in the Seventeenth USA ARDF Championships (Ohio, August 2017) and the Eighteenth USA ARDF Championships (June 2018, see above). Non-competing visitors may also accompany the team.

As of this writing, the team has nine male and three female competitors, plus one visitor.

Prior to the championships, informal ARDF training sessions will take place for team members at Mt. Pinos in California on the weekend of August 11 - 12.

USA and IARU Region 2 ARDF Championships 2019

Your ARDF Coordinator has selected Raleigh, North Carolina as the site of the Nineteenth USA ARDF Championships, which will also be designated as the Tenth ARDF Championships of IARU Region 2. The Backwoods Orienteering Klub (BOK) will host these championships, which will take place in July or August. Co-chairs of the organizers are Joseph Huberman, K5JGH and Ruth Bromer, WB4QZG.

Attendance at USA's ARDF Championships by ARRL section and division leaders is welcomed and encouraged.

ARDF in Scouting

Scout troops and councils around the USA are making plans for the 61st annual Jamboree On The Air during the weekend of October 20 - 21. ARDF makes an excellent addition to the usual on-the-air JOTA activities.

The 2017 update of Scouting's Radio Merit Badge (RMB) includes ARDF for the first time. An optional qualifying activity is for Scouts to build a simple direction-finding antenna for either of

the two bands that are used for competitive ARDF (2m and 80m) and then participate in a simple foxhunt with the antenna and a provided receiver.

With just a little planning and gathering of materials, Scouts can fabricate their own measuring-tape yagis for two meters at JOTA. They can then learn the basics of radio direction finding with this antenna and some small transmitters that have been set up by the sponsoring radio club, as has been done in southern California for several years.

I believe that this ARDF-JOTA connection is a great opportunity that should receive more encouragement from ARRL leaders at Headquarters and in the field organization.

Conclusion

Interest and participation in ARDF activities continues to grow. The encouragement and support of the ARRL Board of Directors for activities of ARDF Team USA and the ARRL ARDF Coordinator is greatly appreciated. Thanks also to ARRL Headquarters, especially ARRL Web and QST staff, for publicizing ARDF activities and events.

I firmly believe that radio-orienteeing is a magnet to our hobby for youth and for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. I welcome efforts by Board members to encourage inclusion of on-foot transmitter hunting activities at local and regional events within their jurisdictions.

More information about ARDF in the USA, including details and photos of local events in the reporting period, can be found at <http://www.homingin.com>.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Moell KØOV
ARRL ARDF Coordinator
homingin@aol.com