

ARRL ARDF Coordinator

Report to the ARRL Board of Directors

July 2019

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 8, 2019 to June 30, 2019.

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 ARRL ARDF Coordinator selects locations and organizers for the annual USA ARDF Championships and selects members of ARDF Team USA to compete in the biennial ARDF World Championships. The focus is on international-rules on-foot foxhunting (also called foxtailing and radio-orienteeing), but not mobile hidden transmitter hunting.

USA and IARU Region 2 ARDF Championships 2019

Your ARDF Coordinator has selected North Carolina as the site of the Nineteenth USA ARDF Championships, which are also designated as the Tenth ARDF Championships of IARU Region 2. Radio-orienteeing courses will be set in forests near Raleigh. Competitors will utilize excellent recent maps provided by Backwoods Orienteering Klub. Co-chairs of the organizers are Joseph Huberman, K5JGH and Ruth Bromer, WB4QZG.

Plans are for a full week of ARDF activities, starting on Sunday, July 28 with practice and training courses in foxhunting in the morning and sprint in the afternoon, followed by a practice session of a special ARDF event for blind and low-signed individuals. Normal-sighted persons may participate by being blindfolded. A half-length 80-meter practice/training course will be available on Monday morning. On Tuesday morning will be a half-length practice two-meter course. Wednesday will be a day of rest, sightseeing, and equipment check. This will be arrival

day for those who do not participate in any practice sessions. A competitor meeting is planned for the evening.

The first championship event, foxoring, will be on Thursday, August 1. Friday begins with the sprint championship, followed by the blind ARDF championships, a model event for equipment testing, and a competitor meeting. The two-meter classic event is on Saturday morning, followed by an awards banquet in the evening with medals for foxoring, sprint and two-meter classic. On Sunday morning is the 80-meter classic competition, followed immediately by awards presentation and departure in the afternoon.

This will be the third USA ARDF Championships to take place in North Carolina. The 2006 championships took place in William B. Umstead State Park near Raleigh-Durham International Airport. The 2013 championships were in Birkhead Wilderness Area of the Uwharrie National Forest, just south of Asheboro.

As always, the USA ARDF Championships are open to anyone, at any ARDF skill level. Medals will be awarded in IARU's six age categories for males and five categories for females. Visiting competitors from other countries are expected, as in previous championships.

Invitations have been issued to the students and coaches of Guangzhou No. 2 High School in China, who participated in the IARU Region 2 ARDF Championships in 2015 and 2017. If a sufficient number of young persons take part in these 2019 championships, awards will be presented in additional IARU categories for youth (M13, M15, W13 and W16).

Online registration for the championships is under way. Latest updates about these championships will be posted at <http://www.homingin.com>. Attendance at USA's ARDF Championships by ARRL section and division leaders is welcomed and encouraged.

IARU Regional ARDF Championships for 2019

It is traditional for each IARU Region to hold ARDF Championships in odd-numbered years, encouraging teams from countries within the region and visitors from elsewhere to attend and compete. As stated above, this year's IARU Region 2 Championships are being held in conjunction with the USA ARDF Championships near Raleigh, North Carolina.

The IARU Region 1 ARDF Championships take place September 2 - 8, 2019 near Rogla, Slovenia. As of this writing, one visitor representing USA is planning to compete.

The IARU Region 3 ARDF Championships were scheduled for September 21 - 26 near Wixi City, China. Several radio-orientees from USA were planning to attend and compete as a USA team. On June 18, an announcement was made by Region 3 ARDF Committee Chair Hiroshi Izuta, JF1RPZ/NE6Z that these championships were cancelled due to irresolvable problems between the Chinese Radio Amateurs Club and local government officials. An offer was made to combine this year's Region 3 Championships with the Region 2 Championships in North Carolina, but this was not accepted by the Region 3 ARDF Committee.

IARU World Championships

It is traditional for the IARU World ARDF Championships to take place in even-numbered years. The 20th World Championships are scheduled for August 31 - September 6, 2020 near Zlatibor, Serbia. Positions on ARDF Team USA to these championships will be offered to the best performers in the USA ARDF Championships of 2019 and 2020.

The World Youth ARDF Championships take place yearly for persons up to and including age 16. The Third World Youth ARDF Championships are June 30 - July 4, 2019 near Vinnytsia, Ukraine. The Fourth World Youth ARDF Championships will be in Serbia during 2020.

New ARDF Coordinator for USA and ARRL

ARRL President Roderick has appointed Jerry Boyd, WB8WFK as the new ARRL ARDF Coordinator, effective July 1. Jerry has been involved in ARDF for many years and has been a frequent medal winner at USA's championships. He was a leader of the organizers of the Region 2 ARDF championships in 2001, 2005 and 2011 in his home town of Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was a member of ARDF Team USA for the ARDF World Championships of 2004, 2006 and 2010.

Conclusion

This is my final report to the Board of Directors as ARRL's ARDF Coordinator. It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve in this position since February 1998. During that time, ARDF has grown steadily in participation and popularity. Every year since 2001, beginners and experts alike have gathered for the USA Championships of ARDF. In odd-numbered years, these events were also designated as the IARU Region 2 ARDF Championships.

USA and ARRL has fielded a team for the biennial ARDF World Championships since 1998 and it has been a better prepared team every time. USA won its first World Championships medal and has medalled every time since. USA garnered ten medals in 2018, with over half of the team members standing on the medal podium at least once.

I greatly appreciate the encouragement and support of the ARRL Board of Directors for activities of ARDF Team USA and the ARRL ARDF Coordinator. Thanks also to ARRL Headquarters, especially ARRL Web and QST staff, for publicizing ARDF activities and events. Please continue to support and encourage the new ARDF Coordinator.

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.

I will continue to provide information about ARDF in the USA, including details and photos of local and national events, on the Web at <http://www.homingin.com>.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Moell KØOV
homingin@aol.com