

1st ARI Meteor Scatter VHF Marathon

managed by ARI Club Firenze

The main goal of this initiative is to bring as many people as possible to acquire the operational methods for making contacts via Meteor-Scatter on VHF.

The choice of the marathon period coincides with the peak of the Perseid meteor shower which in 2024 is expected to have maximum activity on August 12th between 9:00 and 21:00 utc.

Dates:

from August 5th, 2024 00:00 GMT to August 15th, 23:59 GMT

Bands:

- 50 MHz
- 70 MHz
- 144 MHz

Categories:

A single category for each band, regardless of power and antennas used, or whether fixed or portable station.

Exchanges:

Complete callsigns, Reports (depending on the mode), and final Roger (RRRR) that guarantee the validity and confirmation of the QSO.

Modes:

Only QSOs in the MSK144, JT6M, FSK441, SSB, and CW modes are valid.

Score:

For each completed QSO you get a score equal to the distance between the two stations in km.

Valid QSO:

Only one QSO per station is valid, regardless of mode.

In order to avoid counting QSOs that did not occur via Meteor-Scatter (MS), QSOs with QRB less than 600 km will not be considered valid.

Individual participants are responsible for declaring that they have made each contact via MS, and not through other propagation methods such as Troposcatter or ES.

However, the contest manager reserves the right to investigate and, if necessary, delete contacts deemed suspicious because they were not made via Meteor Scatter.

Logs:

The logs, containing the data necessary for the Marathon (callsign, report sent and received, and locator), must be sent in ADIF format no later than August 31st, 2024 via the ARI Firenze website on the following dedicated page:

<http://www.arifirenze.it/maratonams>

Chat/DXCluster use:

The use of DX-cluster and Chatrooms during the marathon is only permitted in such a way that there is no exchange of reports or other data during the QSO. Sending cluster spots of completed QSOs or chat information for a completed QSO is permitted only after the QSO is completed on the bands, but no exchange of information during the QSO.

The use of chats to request skeds is permitted.

Below are some examples of the use of chats:

- Examples of allowed messages:

"Pse Sked on 144.365"

SKED Request

"I have QRM, please QSY on 144.350"

New SKED Request

"Let's try later when conditions improve"

Closure of SKED without completing the QSO

"I have your RR73, tnx for QSO"

Closure of SKED after completion of the QSO

"Thank you for a nice QSO"

Only after the completion of the QSO

- Examples of NOT allowed messages:

"I did not copy report"

Sending important information to complete the QSO

"I received your report"

Sending data for the QSO

"I heard you, pse continue"

Sending important information to complete the QSO

"Sri QRM, repeat message"

Request for part of the data to complete the QSO

Diplomas:

All stations will receive a PDF diploma that can be downloaded from the ARI Firenze website, showing the position in the ranking and the score obtained.

Final Notes:

- a) Sending the log implies that the participant accepts these regulations and agrees to the publication of the data declared in their logs.
- b) By submitting the log the participant AGREES that the competition organizer may mark, modify, publish, republish, print, and distribute (by any means including paper or electronic) the log in its original format, in any other format with or without modifications or combined with the logs of other competitors for participation in the specific contest, other contests or for other reasons including the training and development of the amateur radio activity.

c) The Contest Manager's decisions are final.

Procedural notes for QSOs via Meteor Scatter:

When using the digital modes, it should be kept in mind that on the 50 MHz and 70 MHz bands, periods of 15 seconds are used, unlike the 144 MHz where periods of 30 seconds are used. In SSB and CW modes the periods are generally 60 seconds.

When using MGM-generated modes, please consider that in Europe we use 30-second periods on 144 MHz. Using 15-second periods on the centre calling frequencies will cause interference and waste 50% of your time. Stations in Western and Central Europe (stations in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Northern France) are always transmitting second periods while calling CQ on the centre calling frequencies. If you feel the need to do otherwise, do it well away from the centre calling frequencies and be sure not to cause interference at a station you can copy via tropo.

Centres of MS activity:

- 50.200 SSB/CW
- 50.280 MSK144
- 50.320 JT6M
- 70.174 MSK144
- 70.200 SSB/CW
- 144.200 SSB/CW
- 144.360 MSK144

It is recommended to use these frequencies only for random QSOs and especially in low periods of meteor activity, far from the expected peak of activity.

It is advisable to take skeds on frequencies different from the activity centres, in compliance with the national and IARU Region 1 bandplan.

It is recommended during the greatest meteor activity to use the random activity centre frequencies only for calling and not for completing the QSO, using the Split calling mode (e.g. CQ 375 I1ABC transmitted at 144.360 and setting the receiver at 144.375, such mode involves moving to 144.375 to complete the QSO once a response is received at 144.375, leaving 144.360 free).

Contest Manager

Gabriele Antonielli, IZ5HQB

iz5hqb@gmail.com