



PROPAGATION UPDATE:

CQ WW DX SSB Contest Conditions Look Poor and Somewhat Unstable

[Editor's note: The prediction published in the October issue of CQ was based on observations made two solar rotation periods prior to the CQWW SSB Contest. This update is based on one 27-day period ahead, which is much more accurate.]

Poor to Fair Conditions Expected on CQWW SSB Weekend

Here is an updated forecast for the general propagation conditions expected during the 2018 CQ Worldwide DX SSB Contest weekend of October 27-28. Based on the 27-day recurrence tendencies of solar and geomagnetic conditions, we predict good conditions on day one, and poor conditions on day two. Expect the contest to start with fair conditions but degrade through the weekend.

Daily 10.7cm solar flux levels are expected to be around 65 during the contest weekend, so the higher HF bands will be mostly dead; our workhorse remains 20 meters. The geomagnetic Planetary A-index is expected to be variable. The lower frequencies will be more productive, but when an opening occurs on higher frequencies, weak signals should be copiable.

Remember that at any time during the contest, if there are sunspots present (it could still happen), a flare may occur. When flares erupt, it could cause a radio blackout on the Sun-facing side of the Earth. These last between ten to sixty minutes, depending on the strength and location of the flare. We don't expect much solar flare activity, however.

-- Tomas Hood, NW7US, **CQ** Propagation Editor