EuCW Snakes and Ladders

About Snakes and Ladders

This activity is being introduced into the EuCW calendar for 2014. It will begin on 1.April 2014 and run through until 31.March 2015. The goal of this activity is to promote the use of CW on the CW-portions of the amateur radio bands, and above all to stimulate operators to establish contacts with counterparts equally divided over Europe. Points may be earned by participants based on locator squares, reflecting their efforts to spread their CW activity over Europe.

A certificate will be awarded to every entrant who submits six or more scoring entries to the activity and an endorsement will be added to the certificate for those who submit a qualifying entry for every one of the twelve operating periods. Call-signs of participants who have earned 1st award, 2nd award and 3rd award, will be published on 1.June 2015 as part of a list of all participants and their points earned.

Please note that this is an *activity* and not a contest. Operators are encouraged to have relaxed QSOs, that take at least five minutes to complete. The activity should be equally accessible for the experienced as well as the new operators, so where necessary speed should be reduced (QRS).

How it works

The activity is based on the well-known board game Snakes and Ladders. A version of the game is also known as Chutes and Ladders. It is a classic board game, wherein the board is divided into 100 squares. The object of the game is to navigate one's game piece, according to dice rolls, from the start (bottom square) to the finish (top square), helped or hindered by ladders and snakes respectively. Ladders progress a player towards the finish, snakes regress him towards the start.

In our version of the game the board is made up from the map of the continent of Europe and the individual squares are the locator squares on the map (see section "European Countries and Locator Squares"). Ladders and snakes are derived from the total set of QSOs provided for a complete period of activity, as further explained below (see section "The Activity Manager").

Contacts can be made on any band from 160M to 2M (60M and 4M excluded), but always in accordance with IARU Region 1 band plans applicable at the time of the contact. Contacts must be CW and must be made point-to-point, excluding contacts made through repeaters and satellites.

Any station may be contacted and logged only once on any day per band. A qualifying contact must be made station to station. In a multi-station net, an individual station to station QSO outside of the net must be established to qualify for this activity.

The Activity Manager.

EuCW will appoint a single Activity Manager to oversee the Snakes and Ladders Activity from April 2014 until its conclusion in March 2015 and the announcement of results in June 2015.

Decisions made by the Activity Manger will be final and no correspondence will be entered into. Any decision made by the Activity Manager in an individual case will be applied to every entry to the activity.

Entries may be submitted at the end of an operating period. The Activity Manager will adjudicate the entries received during the fourteen (14) days following the activity period. The Activity Manager will ensure that all entries conform to the format(s) required by the rules and that participation is in the spirit of the activity and of ham radio more generally.

Nomination of squares.

The Activity Manager will derive four (4) active grid squares with lowest activity recorded (the treasure squares!) from the data set of the operating period concerned. These grid squares will be nominated as ladders or ladder squares. If more than four squares with recorded activity tie for lowest activity, they will all become ladder squares for that period.

The Activity Manager will also identify the Snakes in a similar manner. The three (3) squares with most recorded activity (the easy squares!) will be designated snakes or snake squares. If more than three (3) squares tie in any combination, then they will all be combined to create three groups of snake squares.

Square locators can only become snake once every three months, i.e. once a square is snake, it cannot become snake in the succeeding two periods of activity. The next squares qualifying for snake will then be considered.

Active square locators that are neither ladder (or treasure) square nor snake (or easy) square, are referred to as normal locator squares, or just normal squares.

Scoring.

Anyone claiming a contact in a ladder square will climb the ladder by being awarded twenty-five (25) points for a first ladder square, and five (5) additional points for the second and third, wherein the three squares need to be different. Only up to three (3) unique ladder squares will count per period of activity.

Those landing on a Snake by claiming a contact in that square will slide down the snake: the highest level by fifteen (15) points, the next by ten (10) points, the lowest by five (5) points, wherein the highest level relates to the square with highest activity. Per period of activity, only one (the highest ranking) snake can bite, and only if directly before a ladder was climbed. It can also not bite if in the current period a ladder is climbed.

For the first fifteen (15) normal squares, five (5) points are given for each three (3) unique squares.

The number of contacts made in any square is irrelevant.

Results

The results for a period of activity will be announced on or before the last day of the calendar month that follows the period of activity. The results announced every month will comprise a listing of the call-signs of all participants, the treasure and easy locator squares with their associated points, as well as the call-signs of participants who ended up on a treasure and/or an easy square. Based on these results, participants can themselves determine their points collected so far. Intermediate overviews of points collected will be published three times, as indicated below, for integrity-checking purposes. A final overview of points collected will only be announced on the first of June 2015. Intermediate and final overviews shall be listed by call-sign in ascending alphabetical order.

Period of activity	Results due by	Results announced by	Overview published
April 2014	7. May 2014	31. May 2014	
May 2014	7. June 2014	30. June 2014	
June 2014	7. July 2014	31. July 2014	1. September 2014
July 2014	7. August 2014	31. August 2104	
August 2014	7. September 2014	30. September 2014	
September 2014	7. October 2014	31. October 2014	1. December 2014

October 2014	7. November 2014	30. November 2014	
November 2014	7. December 2014	31. December 2104	
December 2014	7. January 2015	31. January 2015	1. March 2015
January 2015	7. February 2015	28. February 2015	
February 2015	7. March 2015	31. March 2015	
March 2015	7. April 2015	30. April 2015	1. June 2015 (final)

European countries and locator squares

Contacts with stations in European countries will count towards a tally for this activity. That definition includes land-based fixed, portable and mobile stations and stations operated from fresh water and inland waterways within a European country as well as tidal waters of a European country. It excludes stations operating Maritime Mobile (/MM) in international waters. A list of countries considered European for this activity, can be found in the appendix.

In any individual entry to the Snakes and Ladders Activity, the Activity Manager's decision on the recognition of a European state will be final; that decision will be applied to every entry for that calendar period. The definition of a European sovereign state will be defined on the first day of each calendar month and no updates to the list of qualifying states will be made until the first day of the next qualifying calendar month.

The grid squares representing the board squares that represent the Snakes and Ladders within the map of Europe, are the 1º by 2º squares of the Maidenhead Locator System, also known as Grid Locator Squares or IARU Locator Squares, or more simply as Grid Squares.

The 1º by 2º squares are represented by a four-character reference, two alpha-characters and two numerics (e.g. JN58 for Munich area). Please visit one of the many sources for Maidenhead Locator information for specific information or other sources to identify European sovereign states.

Operating frequencies

Recommended areas of activity are the upper 10 kHz of the dedicated CW portion of all bands from 160m to 2m, 60m and 4m excluded. These 10kHz regions have been chosen, because they lie outside of the recommended areas for contests. But obviously the whole CW-band may be used for making contacts, the recommended areas are not binding. The following is therefore to be taken as an indication:

> 160m: 1.828 – 1.838 MHz (1.836MHz: QRP activity centre)
>
> 80m: 3.570 – 3.580 MHz
>
> 40m: 7.030 – 7.040 MHz (7.030MHz: QRP activity centre)
>
> 30m: 10.130 – 10.140 MHz
>
> 20m: 14.060 – 14.070 MHz (14.060 MHz: QRP activity centre)
>
> 17m: 18.085 – 18.095 MHz (18.086 MHz: QRP activity centre)
>
> 15m: 21.060 – 21.070 MHz (21.060 MHz: QRP activity centre)
>
> 12m: 24.905 – 24.915 MHz (24.906MHz: QRP activity centre)
>
> 10m: 28.060 – 28.070 MHz (28.060MHz: QRP activity centre)
>
> 6m: 50.090 – 50.100 MHz
>
> 2m: 144.100 – 144.110 MHz

NOTE: QRP calling frequencies are to be avoided by non-QRP operators

Exchange

A qualifying contact shall include at least the exchange of the following information, i.e. each station should send all of these items of information:

Call signs of both stations

On-air name or nickname

QTH – Maidenhead 1º by 2º square as four-character reference OR city, town or village; portable stations must send their grid locator

Signal report – preferably as RST

Entries

Entries must be received by the Activity Manager by email (SL(at)eucw.org) **before** the eighth day of the month that follows the period of operation being recorded. Late entries must and will be excluded, see also the table above.

Entries may be submitted for each operating period. There are twelve (12) operating periods of a calendar month each, beginning on the first day of the calendar month and ending on the last day of that month. All times shall be in Universal Time Coordinated or ZULU time.

Each entry must contain the following information

Period of activity (i.e. calendar month)

Call sign(s) used on air

Operator's name and email

Total number of contacts made (for integrity-checking purposes)

Log entry for each individual contact

Wherein each log entry must contain:

Date and time, preferably on and off times should be included

Band

Station contacted

Signal report sent and received

Operator's name received

Operator's QTH received AND Maidenhead 1º by 2º square as four-character reference received

Entries may include "general comments", and each log entry may contain club membership of the counter-parting operator.

Logs must be send in electronic form, only the ADIF format can be accepted. Check your log before sending that all information required is contained in the file. Logs may be refused if incomplete and cannot be completed with reasonable effort.

Logs in ADIF format are preferably maintained using the free FISTS log-converter that has been adapted for this purpose, and that can be downloaded from the FISTS website as free-ware. This tool, written and maintained by G3ZOD, generates high quality ADIF logs, and is the recommended tool for participating in this activity.

Appendix: European countries (based on and sorted by DXCC code with prefixes in parentheses; Source: ARRL DXCC List, January 2013); European countries include all sovereign states recognised by the United Nations in the continental European land mass and also includes every country that is a member state of the European Union.

005: Åland Islands (OH0)	007: Albania (ZA)
015: Asiatic Russia (UA-UI8,9,0; RA-RZ)	021: Balearic Islands (EA6-EH6)
027: Belarus (EU-EW)	029: Canary Islands (EA8-EH8)
032: Ceuta & Melilla (EA9-EH9)	040: Crete (SV9, J49)
045: Dodecanese (SV5, J45)	052: Estonia (ES)
054: European Russia (UA-UI1-7, RA-RZ)	061: Franz Josef Land (R1/F)
106: Guernsey (GU, GP, MU, 2U)	114: Isle of Man (GD, GT, MD, 2D)
117: ITU HQ (4U_ITU)	118: Jan Mayen (JX)
122: Jersey (GJ, GH, MJ, 2J)	126: Kaliningrad Oblast (UA2, RA2)
145: Latvia (YL)	146: Lithuania (LY)
149: Azores (CU)	167: Market Reef (OJ0)
179: Moldova (ER)	180: Mount Athos (SV/A)
203: Andorra (C3)	206: Austria (OE#)
209: Belgium (ON-OT)	212: Bulgaria (LZ)
214: Corsica (TK)	215: Cyprus (5B, C4, P3)
221: Denmark (OU-OW, OZ)	222: Faroe Islands (OY)
223: England (G, GX, M, 2E)	224: Finland (OF-OI)
225: Sardinia (IS0, IM0)	227: France (F)
230: Federal Republic of Germany (DA-DR)	233: Gibraltar (ZB2)
236: Greece (SV-SZ)	239: Hungary (HA, HG)
242: Iceland (TF)	245: Ireland (EI-EJ)
246: Sovereign Military Order of Malta (1A)	248: Italy (I)
251: Liechtenstein (HB0)	254: Luxembourg (LX)
256: Madeira Island (CT3)	257: Malta (9H)
259: Svalbard (JW)	260: Monaco (3A)
263: Netherlands (PA-PI)	265: Northern Ireland (GI, GN, MI, 2I)
266: Norway (LA-LN)	269: Poland (SN-SR)
272: Portugal (CT)	275: Romania (YO-YR)
278: San Marino (T7)	279: Scotland (GM, GS, MM, 2M)
281: Spain (EA-EH)	283: UK Sovereign Base Areas on Cyprus (ZC4)
284: Sweden (SA-SM, 7S-8S)	287: Switzerland (HB)
288: Ukraine (UR-UZ)	294: Wales (GW, GC, MW, 2W)
295: Vatican (HV)	296: Serbia (YT-YU)
390: Turkey (TA-TC)	497: Croatia (9A)
499: Slovenia (S5)	501: Bosnia-Herzegovina (E7)
502: F.Y.R. of Macedonia (Z3)	503: Czech Republic (OK-OL)
504: Slovak Republic (OM)	514: Montenegro (4O)