

ELECRAFT Operating Note

Working a Pile-up using the Dual Watch feature on the KX3

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Background

Often a DX station will say "up 2" (or just "up") in order to move callers away from his own frequency. This allows everyone to still hear the DX station at all times despite dozens of stations calling.

Traditionally, this is accomplished using SPLIT. On a K3 or KX3, you'd set VFO A to the DX station's frequency, then set VFO B somewhere above this, preferably in a clear spot. When you hit the key in SPLIT mode, the rig transmits on VFO B. You can use the "REV" switch function periodically to listen on VFO B's frequency (swapping A and B), and while REV is held down, adjust the VFO A knob to hunt for a better spot to call.

Discussion

The KX3 provides a simpler alternative that doesn't necessarily require the use of SPLIT: dual watch. This also lets you hear both the DX station and the pileup at the same time, avoiding the need to REVerse the VFOs periodically.

Here's an example:

1. Having found a DX station with VFO A, tap the "A>B" switch twice so that VFO B is on the same frequency.
2. Turn on dual watch by setting MENU:DUAL RX to AUTO. You'll need headphones or dual external speakers; VFO A will be in the left audio channel, and VFO B in the right. (The K3 provides a number of variations on this; refer to the K3 owner's manual.)
3. Move VFO A up about 2 kHz (or the DX station's requested offset). There you may encounter a pileup. Find a clear spot in which to transmit, and call the DX station after he signs with the previous station or calls CQ.

Additional Dual Watch Operating Tips

Use Dual Watch to follow another contact with a DX station

You may have a better chance of working the DX station if you call near the frequency of the station who worked him last. This is one of the best aspects of dual watch: since you're listening to the pileup in the right audio channel, you may hear the other stations being worked, and you can "piggy-back" onto their frequency. A really skilled operator can actually determine how the DX station is moving their own receive VFO just by listening to the pattern of stations worked. You can then move your own VFO to match, anticipating where the DX station will be listening next.

When to use Split on the KX3

SSB DX stations may listen across a wider range of frequencies, possibly going beyond the present +/- 15 kHz maximum spacing between VFOs allowed by the KX3's dual watch function. In this case you might need to use the SPLIT method instead.

Do I have this limitation on the K3?

No. The K3 doesn't share this limitation--its sub receiver can be tuned any distance from the main receiver, and can even use different antennas for the two.

How can I create a one-touch method of turning On/Off the Dual Watch feature?

If you turn dual watch on/off frequently, you might want to assign the DUAL RX menu entry to PF1 or PF2 as explained on page 19 of the KX3 owner's manual. Once you've done this, accessing the programmable function will turn dual watch on/off immediately without the need to go into the menu.