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For Help on Help, Press F1

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Stephen B. Hajducek
U.S. Post Office Box 8
Morganville, New Jersey 07751, U.S.A.

What is CATCCjr ?

CATCCjr is a Demo.

CATCCjr is the Demo version of the commercial CAT Control Center software, a.k.a. CATCC. CATCCjr, like CATCC, provides control of Amateur Radio equipments which include H.F. SSB transceiver, VHF SSB transceiver, VHF Packet TNC, MM-3 CW keyer, Hy-Gain DCU-1 antenna rotor system. Also provided is support for other equipments such as voice keyers or antenna switch boxes via parallel printer port interfacing.

Unlike CATCC, CATCCjr only provides support for simple logging to a CT(tm) .RES compatiable (LOG.RES) file for importation into your existing logging program. Remember, CATCCjr is only a demo, full logging, award tracking, reporting and more is available in CATCC.

The purpose of providing CATCCjr is to allow potential users of CATCC the opportunity to sample the concept, user interface and many of the capabilities of CATCC at no cost or obligation to purchase CATCC. It is also hoped that users of CATCCjr will comment to the author with suggestions for improvement and any detected anomolies.

CATCCjr can be considered SHAREWARE. Howerver, there are **NO** registration fees for CATCCjr and there is **NO** time limits regarding how long it may be used. If CATCCjr suits your radio station control requirements, you may continue to use the software indefinately in accordance with the License requirements herein.

Differences between CATCC and CATCCjr

Many features of CATCCjr have been reduced in scope and or range when compared to the same features in CATCC, while yet other capabilities have been left out altogether.

The DX-Graph(tm) capability for instance has been reduced in scope to only three views and the number of spots maintined in the DX-Spot window has been reduced to 50 for CATCCjr, from the 1,000 in CATCC. Also reduced in functionality is the DX-Filter(tm) and DX-Calendar(tm) capabilities.

Missing altogether in CATCCjr is the full logging, award tracking and printing capabilities of the CATCC DX-dBASE(tm) module. In its place is only a simple CT(tm) compatible .RES ASCII file logging capability. The DX-dBASE(tm) module is a full featured logging program, with support for all the most popular awards and a host of analysis and reporting capabilities written in Visual dBASE v5.5 for Windows. Planned for the DX-dBASE(tm) module is the ability to import and export to the most popular amateur logging programs currently in use. At present (September 95) only the CT(tm) .RES file formats are supported.

The DX-Sleuth(tm) capability, which provides for tracking and analysis of those elusive rare DX stations operating habits by monitoring DX-Cluster(tm) activitiy has also been removed from CATCCjr. As has the complete Accu-Rotor(tm) control capabilities, functionality has been reduced, with no support provided for automated bearing determinations on Callsign, Grid Square or Geodectic Coordinates.

Also missing in CATCCjr is the support for VHF/UHF transverter operation and other brands of VHF radio equipment besides the Yaesu models FT-650 and FT-736R.

Support

No support is provided for CATCCjr.

CATCC Availability ?

The CATCC software is scheduled for release in November 1995. Orders will be accepted in advance with shipments made in the order received.

CATCC is priced at $49.95 U.S. or $59.95 U.S. with a printed bound users manual. (New Jersey residents please add 6% sales tax.)

Shipping and handling will be $7.00 U.S. for domestic orders and $15.00 U.S. for international. Domestic orders will be shipped via U.S. Priority Mail. International orders will be shipped by the best method available from here.

All orders must be prepaid in U.S. funds drawn on a U.S. bank. Currently accepted are: U.S. Postal Money Order, Cashiers Check or Personal Check made payable to: Stephen B. Hajducek. Cash in U.S. funds will of course be accepted, but is it not recommended to mail cash.

Hardware Requirements

CATCCjr requires as a minimum an IBM compatiable computer (we already know this) with an 80386DX25 or compatiable CPU, a SVGA video board and monitor running 1024 x 768 (CATCCjr is written to run in 640x480), 4MB RAM, two RS-232C serial ports, one parallel printer port and a hard disk with about 20MB free disk space for the software and MS-Windows(tm) 3.1 or greater. When running Windows 3.1, SHARE.EXE must also be installed.

CATCCjr has been tested under MS-Windows 3.1, Windows for Workgroups 3.11, Windows95 and WindowsNT, all without any problems when only the environment and the software were running. When running other software concurrently with CATCCjr, the more memory available the better, 8MB of RAM should be optimum.

Also required are the Amateur Radio equipments, as a minimum all that is required to start to operate CATCCjr and appreciate some of its features is a TNC to monitor the DX-Cluster(tm).
Any RS-232C interface TNC-2 compatiable TNC should work just fine. The AEA PK232, PK88, MFJ 1276 (and others) and KAM II Plus have all been tested extensively without problems.

For real use of the software, an CAT controlled H.F. transceiver and interface is required. At present CATCCjr supports both Kenwood and Yaesu H.F. CAT transceivers, as listed within the software setup. For VHF operation, CATCCjr has been altered from CATCC in that only the Yaesu FT-650 and FT-736R are supported for 6m operation in both cases and 2m, 222, 432 and 1200Mhz in the case of the FT-736R. (In the commercial CATCC software, additional equipments are supported for VHF operations, including the use of H.F. transceivers and transverters from menu configuration.)

Other equipments are optionally supported, such as the Hy-Gain DSU-1 rotor, AEA MM-3 Electronic Contest Keyer and various parallel printer port keyed devices such as the J-COM Ventriloquist Voice Keyer.

CATCC currently supports eight (8) serial ports and all three (3) parallel printer ports. Multiport port serial cards such as Digiboard anc Comtrol are supported for serial I/O. CATCCjr provides support for the following:

1 HF rig, 1 VHF rig, 1 VHF TNC, 1 MM-3, 1 DCU-1 rotor and 1 parallel port device.

CATCCjr Condensed Help

NOTE:

Only limited help is being provided for CATCCjr at this time. There are no plans to create a complete help file/manual for the CATCCjr software. The complete CATCC help file will be available from the support BBS in a draft form some time in October 1995, followed by the completed version sometime in November.

The first step in using CATCCjr is to set your computers com ports up correctly under MS-Windows. For achieve this we defer to the MS-Windows documentation and your serial card and driver documentation as applicable. We will however state that, you should have each serial port configured on a separate address, with a separate IRQ that does not conflick with any ohter devices.

The next step is to either run the SETPORTS program or the CATCCjr software. In either case you must next select the radio equipments to be used and specify the ports and in some cases the baud rates that they are operating with.

As seen in Figure 1. below represents the main CATCCjr operating window as it would appear running Windows95 when a Yaesu H.F. radio has been configured. From the system menu you may select Port Setup followed by Setup Ports.

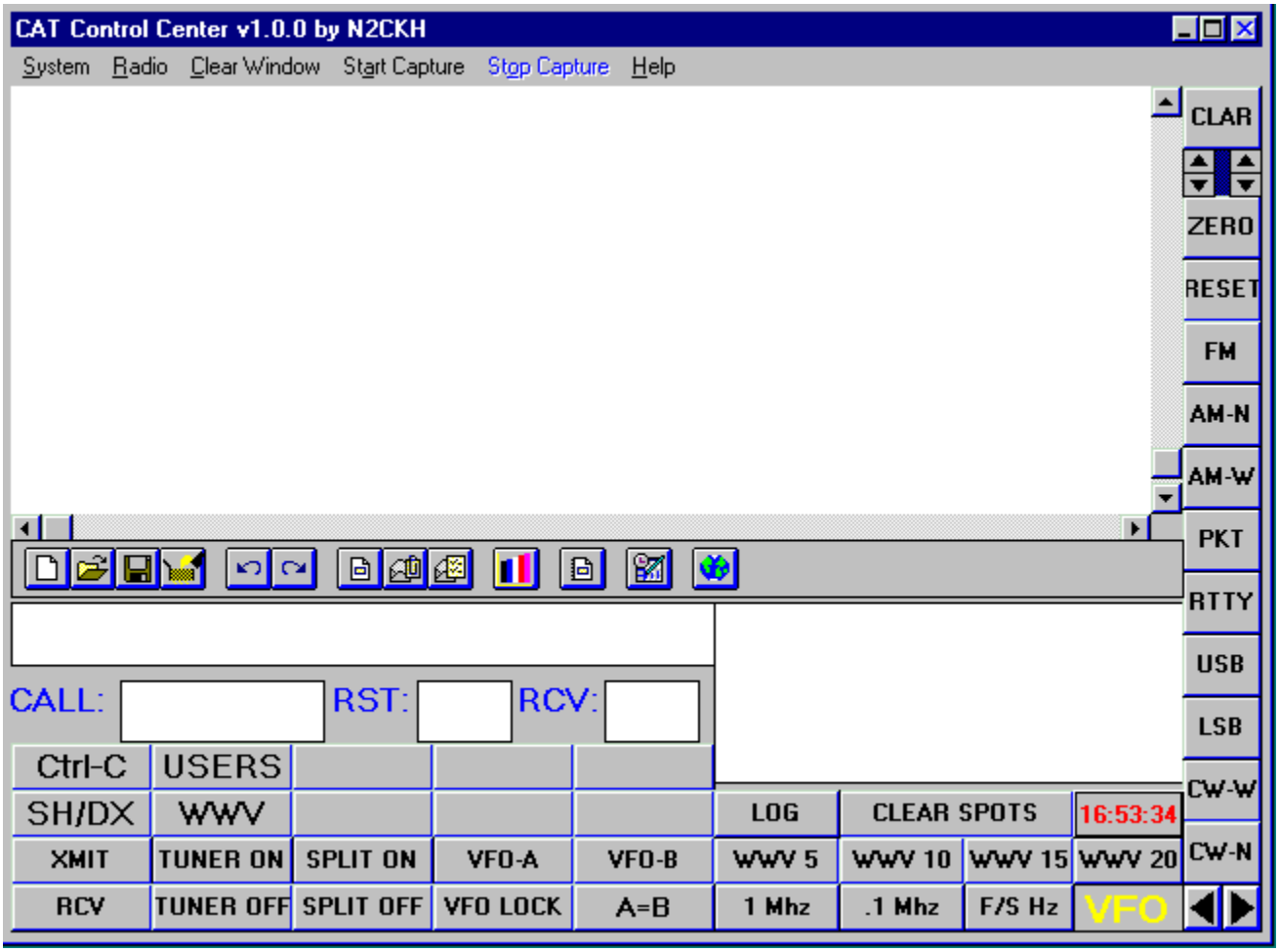

Figure 1.

Figure 2. below depicts the Set Ports interface and menu structure. After selecting your stations equipments (select your radio by model number, it is important that you select your exact model number for optimum performance.) and setting the appropriate ports/baud rates you must save this information. Before saving however, make sure your equipments are connected properly and powered on, as the CATCCjr software will attempt to communicate immediately.

You are now ready to begin using the CATCCjr software.

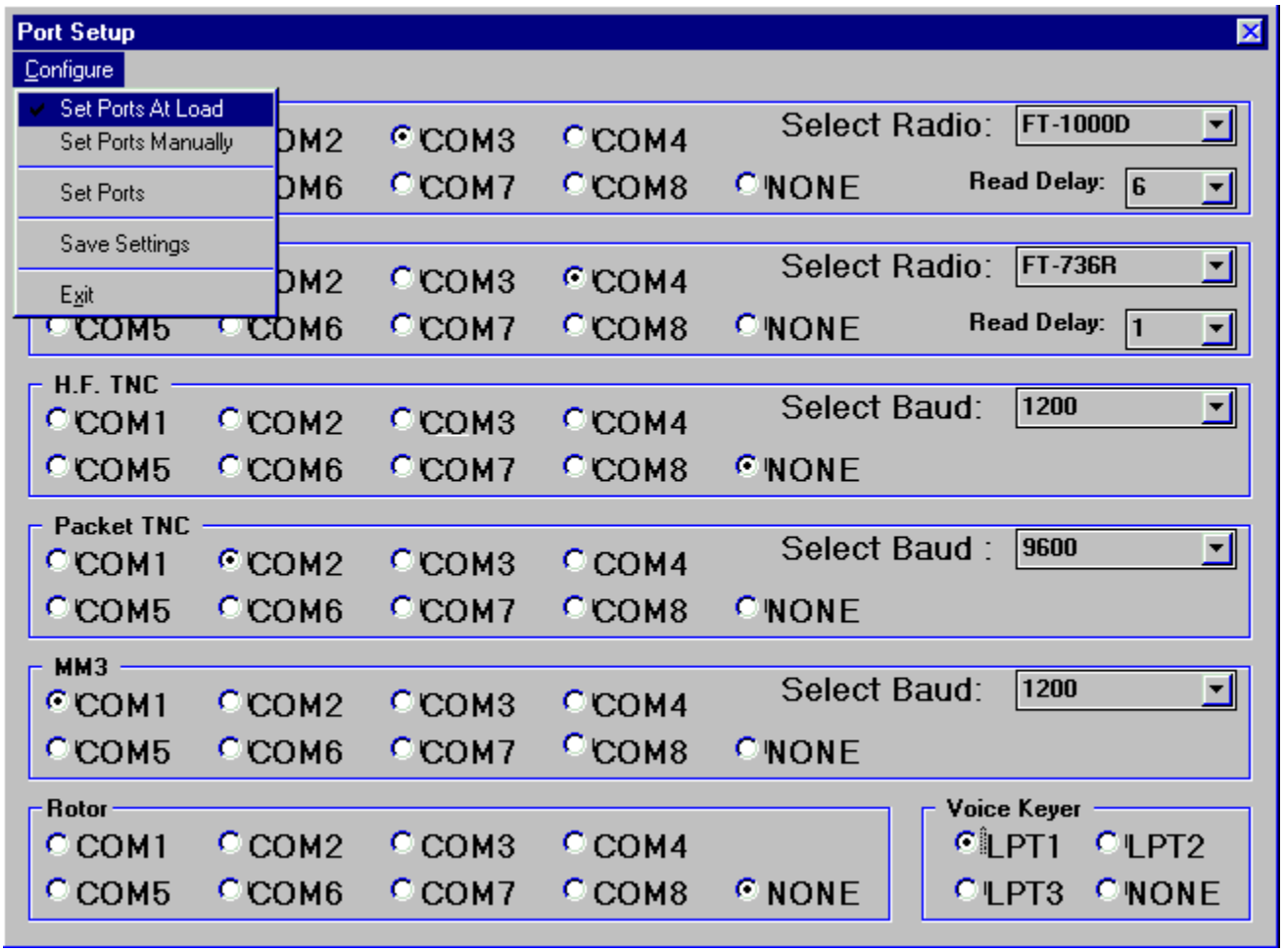

Figure 2.

When you have properly configured your computer, radio equipments and the CATCCjr software and all systems have been powered on, as well as your VHF/UHF FM radio for the TNC, you will start to see information appear on the main Window (it has the vertical and horizontal scroll bars). When any DX-Cluster(tm) spots are received, they will also be displayed in the spot window just
below it and above the clock. When the spot window fills, a verticle scroll bar will be enabled. For the CATCCjr program, only the most recent fifty (50) spots are kept queued. (CATCC has 1,000).

A spot is selected by double clicking on it, when this is done, the H.F. radio (if active) will change in frequency (optionally mode will be changed also) and the callsign for the spot (also RST info if in AutoMode(tm)) will be filled in to the left of the spot window.

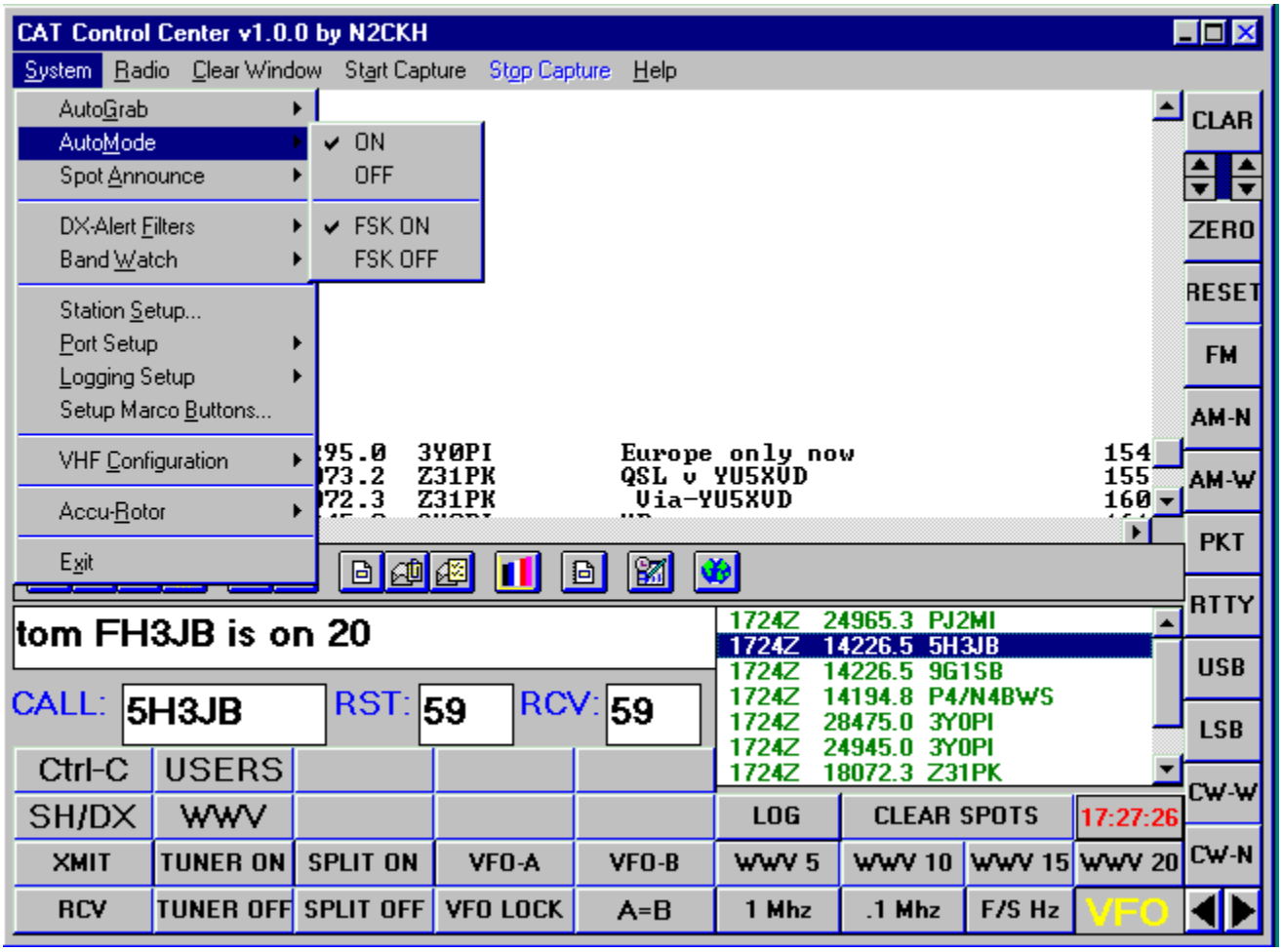

Figure 3.

The following functions, modes and capabilities should be considered everytime CATCCjr is used.

AutoGrab
AutoMode
Spot Announce
DX-Filters(tm)
BandWatch

The rest I will leave to you the user to explore and discover for this demo version of CATCC. The missing capabilities such as Auto-Prefix(tm) which provides instantaneous country, ITU and CQ Zone plus bearing and distance inforation (bearing is used by Accu-Rotor(tm) for automated antenna rotation) and DX-Sleuth(tm) are truly outstanding, as is the DX-dBASE(tm) logbook manager.

Keyboard Control

The software can be controlled by both keyboard key combinations and a pointing device. Most keyboard combinations can be found on the pull down menus. I believe the program to be rather intuitive in operation, by not providing documentation with CATCCjr I am testing my belief.

However, support for the MM-3 keyer in kind of hidden. The MM-3 is active in CATCCjr, although reduced, only keying is provided, not programming. For Bank A use the Ctrl-F1 thru Ctrl-F10 keys, for Bank B use the Alt-F1 through Alt-F10 keys repectfully when the MM-3 is enabled.

Support for one parallel printer port keying is provided as specified by the standard set by the NA logging program with enhancements. Ports 1, 2 or 3 may be used with the following function key vs. connector relationship:

F1 = Pin 3
F2 = Pin 4
F3 = Pin 5
F4 = Pin 6

Additional support is provided as follows:

F8 = Pin 2
F5 = Pin 7
F6 = Pin 8
F7 = Pin 9

In CATCCjr only one port may be used at a time, in CATCC all three parallel ports may be used simultaneously for control of voice keyers, cw keyers, rotors, switch boxes and just about anything that the user builds an interface to key.

The following are some key combinations perform various H.F. radio control functions and main program control functions when the mouse cursor is located in one of the main screen sub windows. They are all listed on the pull down menus, heres a sampling:

Ctrl-V = VFO-A
Ctrl-B = VFO-B
Ctrl-S = Split On
Ctrl-D = Split Off
Ctrl-K = Direct Frequency Entry (very smart, period (.) first like .770 for A.M. broadcast)

Ctrl-U = USB
Cltrl-L = LSB
Ctrl-A = AM
Ctrl-F = FM
Ctrl-C = CW-W
Ctrl-N = CW-N

Ctrl-G = Grab Last Spot
Ctrl-Q = Start HF VFO
Ctrl-E = Start HF Sub VFO (FT-1000 currently)
Ctrl-H = Start HUD (Heads up display s-meter)
Del = Start VHF VFO

Ctrl-X = Xmit
Ctrl-Y = Rcve
Ctrl-T = Tune (Tune for Kenwoods, CW for Yaesu for 10 seconds)

A Few Radio Notes

CATCCjr and for that matter, CATCC itself, does not bother to provide for every computer control capability the manufactuers have provided. However, no other program that the author or anyone else the author has spoken with, seems to know of another program that even comes close.

The reason for not provided every possible command provided is simple, some of the commands have no real good use, and not all commands work in all radios either. You will find that certain things dont work on all radios. The Yaesu FT-840 for instance does not support clarifier control over the bus, all other Yaesu H.F. radios of recent manufacture that are supported do.

Furthermore, older radios by Yaesu had problematic firmware. The FT-1000 and FT-990 radios are notorious for these problems. For the FT-990, if your EPROM version is v1.2 or less, get it updated, we have found that v1.3 works just fine. You will not have good results reading information from the FT-990 with the older versions.

I am attempting to gather information on the various radios and their EPROM bugs, but for now just call Yaesu and find out if your radio needs and upgrade. The same applies to Kenwood, the Kenwood radios are not without problems too.

The Yaesu FT-1000MP was released just prior to this demo being prepared, Yaesu has supplied the programming information for it, and except for the added EDSP support, all computer control is the same. I will add support for the new EDSP control capabilities in CATCC when I have an FT-1000MP to test with. By the way, the RS-232 interface is built in.

The Kenwood TS-870S was released just prior to this demo being prepare also. Kenwood was not able to provide any programming information for it or any details on computer control. It does have a built in port and can run either at or up to 57600 baud. If it runs at 4800 baud, exactly like the previous Kenwood radios and recognises the previous commands, all is well. If not, well someone send me the programming information as soon as possible.

Support for JRC, Ten-Ten, SGC and Icom is planned for future releases of CATCC. However, at this time I do NOT plan on updating CATCCjr for additional radio support or fro anything for that matter.

Third Party Software Supported

With respect to on-line callbooks. The QRZ, SAM, Amsoft, Buckmaster and the Radio Amater Callbook on CD-ROM should all be supported by the release of CATCC.

Furthermore, you will see that CATCC/CATCCjr supports the Delorme Global Explorer Mapping CD-ROM (not Street Atlas U.S.) is supported. This resource is a wonderful capability when making those first contacts or every contact is we had a hook to provide the mapping database a geodectic position to center and display on. With Accu-Prefix(tm) CATCC has the geodectic coordinates, especially when the DX-Station provides you with there four or six place maiden head grid square.

Just imagine having CATCC configured for this feature and grabbing a new DX-Spot and having a digital map appear on screen centered on the location of the DX-Station, with informative gazetteer information on that region to make you sound more worldly to boot!

I have written to Delorme, expressing my desire for them to bring an updated or new product to market, if everyone that reads this does the same, then we should be able to bring a great new capability to Amateur Radio that not only CATCC will support, but I am sure other MS-Windows based amateur software will also.

Please express your support for this by writting to:

Mr. David Delorme, Pres.
Delorme Mapping
P.O. Box 298
Lower Main Street
Freeport, ME 04032

AutoGrab(tm)

AutoGrab will cause the main HF or VHF rig to follow the DX-Spots received without user intervention. Either all DX-Spots or just those matching DX-Filters depending on user configuration. AutoGrab functions with all other program modes.

AutoMode(tm)

AutoMode will cause the mode of the HF and VHF rig to change in accordance with the ARRL band plan when ever a DX-Spot is grabbed. Depending on make and model of radio, when in digital windows, FSK will be selected, unless over ridden by user turning FSK off. Automode functions in all program modes.

Spot Announce

When active all spots will be announced through the system auddio subsystem. Sound Blaster and standard speaker driver support is provided. Announcements can be set to repeat once. The voice is male (voice of N2CKH) at this time. Anyone with a good speaking voice in various languages, male and female that wish to submit libraries as 8 bit mono .wav files are welcome to do so for the benefit of all users.

DX-Filters(tm)

DX-Filters are always active when either a DEFAULT.DXF file or a .DXF file for the current date is present at program startup. The user may edit, create, save and or load .DXF files at anytime during program execution. CATCC, not CATCCjr, will check for a .DXF firle for the current date at each Zulu day rollover. At present there are up to twenty (20) entries supported in .DXF files (plain ASCII file structure)

BandWatch

Bandwatches may be set for any or all 15 bands supported from 1.8 to 902 Mhz. When the first and each succeeding DX-spot for a given band that has a watch set is received the BandWatch audible alarm will sounds. You'll know the sound very soon!