

RARS PRESENTATION

SEPTEMBER 8, 2025

PRESENTER: DEVIN HEDGE

JS8CALL – THE SOCIAL SIDE OF DIGITAL HAM RADIO

WHO I AM – DEVIN B. HEDGE

KN4FVH

- Army Signal Officer – first exposure to RTTY & Packet
- CEO of Calatüré, LLC – sustainability & energy tech
- Engineer, software dev, tinkerer
- Family + ADHD + Backpacking = Resilient Experimenter
- Looking for modes that enable real-time(ish) conversations
(i.e. PSK31 without the headache)

- Evolution: CW → SSB → Digital
- Weak-signal comms enable DX & EMCOMM
- FT8 & others = transactional or functional
- JS8Call = puts the 'social' back into digital radio

**WHY
DIGITAL
MODES
MATTER**

MODE COMPARISON TABLE — JS8CALL FEATURED

Mode	Bands	Strengths	Typical Use
FT8	HF	Weak-signal efficiency, global DX	Contesting, logging contacts
PSK31	HF	Conversational keyboard chat	Ragchew, casual QSOs
RTTY	HF	Legacy contesting mode	Radiosport, tradition
Packet/TARPN	VHF/UHF	Local networking, node routing	Bulletin boards, local nets
Winlink	HF/VHF	Email over radio, robust	EMCOMM, off-grid messaging
APRS	VHF/UHF	Position + weather + short text	SAR, public service events
Meshtastic	LoRa/ISM*	Mesh networking, low-cost devices	Hiking, prepper, maker culture
JS8Call ★ (Featured)	HF	Conversational + resilient	Social QSOs, group nets, EMCOMM

* LoRa devices default to ISM bands but can be tuned for ham allocations with an amateur license.

SPOTLIGHT ON FT8

- POPULAR: weak-signal, global reach, contesting
- Strengths: EFFICIENT, 15s cycles, DX with 5W
- Limitations: structured, NOT CONVERSATIONAL
- FT8 = efficient, but NOT SOCIAL → Enter JS8Call

SPOTLIGHT ON JS8CALL – THE SOCIAL MODE



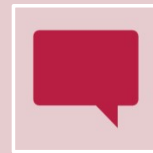
FT8 engine + free-form text



Conversational
QSOs – ragchew
possible



Features: heartbeats,
RELAYS, GROUP
CALLS



STORE &
FORWARD
MESSAGING



Think of it as 'ham
radio **TEXTING**
OVER HF'

BUT WAIT...THERE'S MORE...!!!

EMERGING FEATURES

- JS8Call to WinLink Bridge
- JS8Call to Email Bridge
- JS8Call to SMS Bridge
- JS8Call to APRS Bridge



JS8Call DEMO (Maybe)



Heartbeat



Message
Exchange

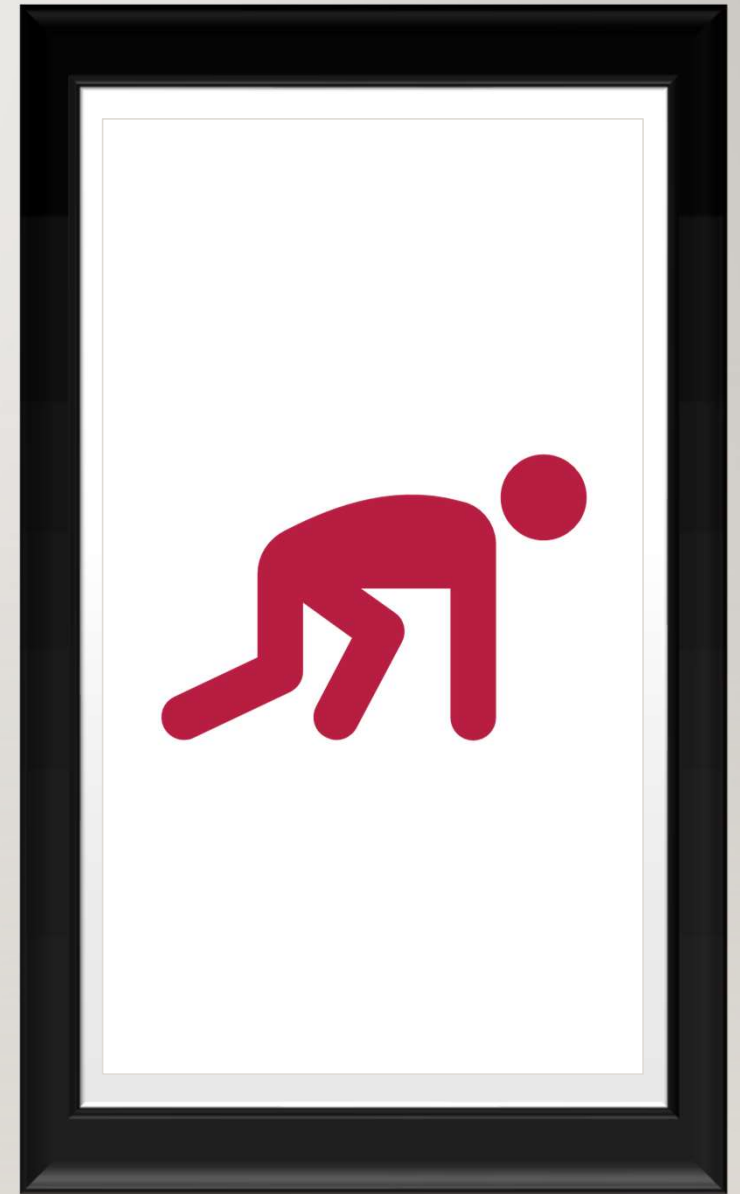


Relay
Messaging



Group
Messaging

GETTING STARTED WITH JS8CALL



GEAR



HF rig



CAT Control and
Sound Card Interface



Computer/Tablet



Optional:

USB GPS

SOFTWARE

- JS8Call
- Logger (HAMRS, CQRLog)
- Optional:
 - Winlink
 - APRS
 - WSJT-X
 - GridTracker 2

CONNECT IT ALL TOGETHER



TIPS



BALANCE AUDIO



VERIFY RIG
CONTROL

BEST STARTER BANDS



40m & 20m



Start by decoding & watching conversations

WRAP-UP & KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Digital = efficiency, resilience, experimentation
- FT8 = structured, global reach
- APRS/Winlink = functional use
- Meshtastic = modern mesh networking
- JS8Call = social, conversational, community-driven
- Call to Action
 - Try JS8Call this week
 - Join the RARS Call Group (@RARS)
 - Tell me if you want a

WHERE TO LEARN MORE



JS8CALL.COM –
DOWNLOADS &
GUIDES



ARRL DIGITAL MODES
– ARRL.ORG/DIGITAL-
MODES



HAM RADIO CRASH
COURSE – YOUTUBE



RARS NETS, JS8CALL
NETS, SOUTHEAST
DIGITAL NET



NEXT STEP: LISTEN
ON 7.078 MHZ