SOTA - Computer Based Logging

Image by DL4MFM/www.adventureradio.de

VS.

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Motivation

- Typing in QSOs at home after an activation is
  - Time consuming
  - Error prone
  - Cumbersome / boring
- Paper logs can get wet or blown away by the wind...
- Solution (?): PC based logging

Challenges

- Good SOTA-aware log software is rare → often post-processing needed (create CSV)

- Additional weight

- Battery lifetime (for longer activations)

- Environment issues:
    - Rain, snow, cold temperatures
    - Bright sunlight (display readability)

Looking for the perfect device

- Lightweight

- Big-enough and bright display

- Long battery life

- Mechanical keyboard, if possible usable with gloves for winter activations

- Using my favorite OS (which is Linux)

- Did I mention lightweight?

I ♥ light – my 582g SOTA Station

(batteries included)

The Pandora Handheld Console

Image by Michael Mrozek, Creative Commons Attribution 1.0 license
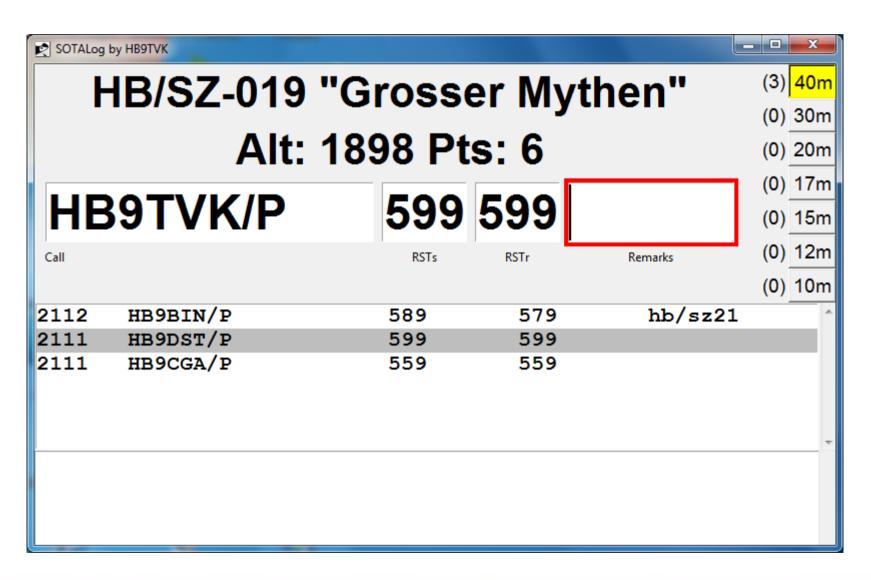
Some specs

- Weight: 320g

- Size: 14 x 8.3 x 2.9 cm^3

- Display: 800x480 (4.3" TFT)

- CPU: ARM Cortex A8, 600MHz

- 256 MB RAM, 2 SD-Card Slots, WiFi

- 10 hours battery runtime

- Out of stock, but successor (Pyra) on the way (www.pyra-handheld.com)

But what about the software?

- No dedicated log program for SOTA available, especially not running on Linux

- I already developed a log program before (for the Swiss National Mountain Day Contest)

- Decided to write my own, tailored to SOTA needs

- Written in the portable TCL/TK language → Runs on Linux, Windows and MacOS-X

Demo

Features

- Creates CSV for direct upload to the sotadb (including s2s)
- Creates ADIF for home log
- Complete list of summits included (shows altitude and points)
- Displays name of remote operator (mapping must be provided)
- Large font for good readability in bright sunlight
- Logs UTC automatically (obviously...)
- Shows potential matches for registered activator and chaser callsigns while typing (~6000 callsigns)
- S2S entry with validation
- Online update of summit list and callsigns
- With serial cable to KX3: automatic band change
- Runs on Windows, Linux, MacOS-X (no installer needed)

Get it for free

- I put SOTALog in the public domain

- Download it for free here:

  http://sota.hb9tvk.org/sotalog

(Feedback, comments and suggestions welcome. I might be too busy activating summits though, so don't expect quick updates...)

Thank you!

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