Marko

Some quick info.

The **IOTA award was started in 1964** and Geoff Watts (IOTA founder) ran an **IOTA contest from 1966 to 1972**. This was not a "contest" in the currently accepted sense. QSL cards were required, and the first winner was IT1TAI. **The first contest in the current series was in 1993**, and the contest has grown a lot since then. The rules have changed a little over the years, mainly to try and get the balance right between island and non-island contacts. Some people ask why world-world contacts are allowed, but it isn't always possible to know that someone is on an island when you forts call him and, in any case, some parts of the world (mid-West USA, for example) have periods when they have no propagation to islands. But, of course, islands score the best points and are also mults. The contest was SSB at first, but there was a demand for CW, and now the number of QSOs is almost 50/50 CW/SSB.

The contest is quite separate from the IOTA Awards Program (also run under the control of the RSGB, but managed by G3KMA). One f the difficulties in preparing rules for the contest is that it has to appeal to both contesters who know little about IOTA, and IOTA chasers who know little about contesting!

Total entries have increased as follows:

**1993 308
1994 397
1995 629
1996 766
1997 892
1998 906
1999 1083
2000 1121
2001 1123
2002 1263
2003 1251
2004 1228**

The contest runs under the control of the RSGB HF Contests Committee, but quickly became larger than any other RSGB contest, so that G3SJJ took on the running of the IOTA contest separately from other RSGB contests. G3XTT took over as manager of the contest in 2001.

Contest records now appear on the RSGB HFCC Web site (www.rsgbhfcc.org) .

The number of trophies has increased considerably over the years, to reflect the increased participation. A full list appears on the Web site.

Results appear in the RSGB's RadCom magazine, but in recent years have also been published on the Internet as soon as they are available. Checking has also been improved significantly, using PC-based systems. This year, for the first time, a Web page was used for collecting entrant info. to ensure we have accurate information about category, etc. (IOTA contest catageories are different from many other contests, and this is not always supported by contesting software). About 80% of logs now arrive by e-mail, increasingly in Cabrillo format. This is very helpful to the organisers.

Please let me know if you have any specific questions.

73 Don G3XTT
Manager, IOTA Contest