Our Next Meeting
**Program To Be Announced –
Watch The Reflector**

Nov. 14, 2005: 6PM schmooze, 6:30 dinner, 7PM program

Location: Chevy's Fresh Mex, 2907 El Camino Real; Redwood City, CA 94061   (650) 367-6892. Buffet Mexican Dinner - $20. Please RSVP in advance by Nov. 11 (Friday) to W0YK, payment preferred via PayPal, else in cash or check at the door.

Directions: **From 101 North or South**

Take the Woodside exit (Hwy 84), southwest (away from the Bay) to El Camino. Turn left (southeast) and drive about 11 blocks. Chevy's is on your right at the corner of Selby Lane.

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SS CW – Saturday, Nov. 5
Will it be a "threepeat?"

For two meetings now the Club has discussed strategies, propagation, HMOs, SS tips, and even a simulated SS fone contest. We've been gathering "pledges" and they're posted on the Website's members' page. Right now, the numbers add up to a less than rousing total. After back-to-back victories are we getting complacent? It's only two weekends out of 52. Help the Club and KB in SS '05.

This year conditions promise to be even more dicey than last year. It looks like we can forget 10 meters, and we may all end up squeezed together on 20 meters during the first few hours. An early QSY to 40 meters may also be in the cards this year. But, as Dean showed in his research into SS contests of years past, the sun spots are irrelevant. The club that submits more logs is almost always the club that wins.

So, get your stations, computers and logging programs tested and ready. Be committed to staying in the chair for the full 24. Enter as "U" class and make use of spotting to snag as many multipliers as you can, from the start. Keep plugging away during the doldrums on Sunday afternoon. And, make sure you submit your log before the deadline. If we all do that, we can't lose.

SS Propagation and Rally Times

80 Meters: Nov. 2005 NCCC, for SSN = Very Low, Sigs in S-Units. By N6BV, ARRL.

Zone	UTC --> 00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
KL7 = 01	9	9	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9	7	4	-	-	-
VO2 = 02	8	8	9	9	9+	9+	9+	9+	9	9+	9	9	9+	8	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
W6 = 03	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9
W9 = 04	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9	5	-	-	-	-	-	7
W3 = 05	9	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9	8	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	4

40 Meters: Nov. 2005 NCCC, for SSN = Very Low, Sigs in S-Units. By N6BV, ARRL.

Zone	UTC --> 00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
KL7 = 01	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9+	9+	9+	9+	9	8	9
VO2 = 02	9+	9+	9	6	6	6	8	9+	8	6	4	4	6	9+	9+	8	7	5	4	6	6	8	9
W6 = 03	9+	9	8	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9
W9 = 04	9+	9+	9+	9	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9	9	9+	9+	9+	9	9	7	7	7	9	9
W3 = 05	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9	8	5	3	3	6	8	9

20 Meters: Nov. 2005 NCCC, for SSN = Very Low, Sigs in S-Units. By N6BV, ARRL.

Zone	UTC --> 00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
KL7 = 01	9+	5	9	8	4	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	9+	9	7	9+	9+	9+	9
VO2 = 02	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	9	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9
W6 = 03	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
W9 = 04	9+	9+	9	4	2	2	4	6	8	7	5	-	-	7	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9+	9
W3 = 05	9	1	4	1	1	2	3	5	6	6	2	-	1	8	8	9+	9+	9+	9	9+	9+	9+	9

15 Meters: Nov. 2005 NCCC, for SSN = Very Low, Sigs in S-Units. By N6BV, ARRL.

Zone	UTC --> 00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
KL7 = 01	9+	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	9	9+	9	9	9
VO2 = 02	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	8	9	9	8	1
W6 = 03	6	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	6	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
W9 = 04	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	9+	9+	9	9	9+	9+	9
W3 = 05	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	8	8	9	9	7	2

10 Meters: Nov. 2005 NCCC, for SSN = Very Low, Sigs in S-Units. By N6BV, ARRL.

Zone	UTC --> 00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
KL7 = 01	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	3
VO2 = 02	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
W6 = 03	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
W9 = 04	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	7	8	8	6	1
W3 = 05	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Rally Times: 80m (3550+/-, 3850+/-) are 05Z and 07Z .
    40m (7040+/-, 7225+/-) at   2100Z (1 PM, Sunday)

Rally times are for NCCCers to work one another. Stations that have been primarily S&P must remember to call CQ so they can be spotted and worked. It is a judgment call. If you are CQing and sustaining a good rate – stay where you are. The 40 Sunday 1 PM on 40 is usually during the Sunday doldrums, so it's a good opportunity to increase rate and gain extra points.

USE THIS PAGE TO COME UP WITH A CONTEST PLAN

Sit In The Chair

Ken Keeler, N6RO

1. PLAN (to sit in the chair)

Commit to maximum hours, both modes of SS. At minimum, do the first 8 hours of each weekend. Arrange family/job/personal plans to be on for NCCC's big event, **Nov. 5-6, 19-20.**

Decide on 24 hours at home or an HMO 12/12 strategy, particularly on CW.
Set *GOALS*: Top 10, top in section, beat last years's score, you decide.
Band Plan: Base it on previous years' results, prop forecasts. See rate sheets.

2. PREPARE (to sit in the chair)

*Use NCCC Resources***:** SS Handbook, Website, meetings, clinics, Thursday night practice.
Finalize Station Setup - check out on Thursday practices:
Radios: SO2R or second RX .
Amplifier (life & SS is too short for QRP or LP)
Logging Software, packet, Voice keyers, CW Keyer (external for backup)
Antennas - include 80m dipole, low height OK. Traps, band filters
Resolve RFI issues in computer, keyers, etc......

PRACTICE - There's no substitute for this, no matter what your contest experience is:

Join the 30 minute Thursday/Friday night SS practice events: 730-8 PT : Oct. 27, Nov. 3,4, 17,18.

Other contest practice most Thursdays, some Fridays. Get feedback/advice from club members on NCCC net on 3830 after each practice contest.

*Physical Preparation***:** Get sleep in advance, diet if you believe, arrange for food service! Make notes (alerts in logging S/W) for NCCC gatherings during SS:

05Z Sat.- 80m, 21Z Sun.- 40m, 0250 Sun-80m
Just before contest: *SET CLOCK and DATE on your logging computer*

3. DO IT   (Sit in the chair, and stay there!)

Start on time -21Z; Go for *RATE* always, while striving for *accuracy (long exchange)*.

Strategy: Run vs. S&P?   It depends on your attitude, actual station performance, band, etc. Work NCCC members, (2 for us, 0 for them (SMC, YCCC, etc...) S&P for NCCC during slow hours, use packet.

Top achievers: Operate first 12 hours without a break!! Have your support bring food to you.

On Sunday, persist. *Endurance wins!*. Use tools you have - SO2R, 2nd RX, Packet... Refer to rate sheets and N6BV's propagation presentation for band planning, but be flexible:
Bottom line? Use your commitment & preparation, then **SIT IN THE CHAIR. KB!**

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The FCC Should Drop Five wpm Code.

Richard Hill, NU6T

The FCC should drop five wpm code. Bravo! About time! Perhaps Extra Class should have an 18 wpm requirement. The following is an opinion from a no-code Technician who became an Extra-Lite the hard way through study and work, and is now struggling against translation and other novice bad habits to succeed at conver-sational and contest-quality Morse Code.

It is past time to teach code using the same methods we use to teach foreign languages. I think code is being taught all wrong and got screwed up when people started thinking of CW as a hazing tool used against hams wanting to join the club.

I have heard how they taught code in the military, but recognize that part of the

military's goal was hazing. If you did not quickly show aptitude and talent for CW, you were given a rifle and pointed to a foxhole or perhaps given a mop so you could swab decks. It seems that many who did not pass radio school eventually became successful hams that use code today. Of course, the point of radio school was to quickly develop radio operators who could quickly type messages. Hand writing and typing take more time than conversational voice communications.

I hope that dropping the requirement leads to more voluntary interest in Morse code and to enlightened code education.

The comment often made that SSB is easy and CW is hard seems like elitist bunk. SSB is no more or less difficult to learn than CW; in my opinion, it is just that we had a head start learning voice. SSB is less efficient and so it is harder to make contacts on SSB when conditions are tough or equipment is marginal for the conditions.

CW is the easier mode once you get past learning code. Learning CW would be much easier if we didn't choose to put such big, useless, hurdles in the way. CW has more prestige, and since it is perceived as more difficult, people study harder and there may be more mentoring. Many on SSB were never taught how to use their privilege nor were their novice mistakes corrected by a gentle group of mentors. Without mentors, it will only get worse.

There were many 8-10 year old kids who gobbled up code back when it was the normal thing to do to get into the fun. Code was and is the ideal way for beginners to get into radio, DXing and world exploration.

Building kits is the first and most logical step into a life understanding of electronics and the electronics of radio. It is the cheap way to get started as long as you do CW and so is available to young and/or impoverished (or cheap <grin>) hams.

Teaching kids is different from teaching adults. Learning code at 50 is no joy. It took my kid a few hours to do what I struggle for a year to accomplish probably in a large part due to my improper learning methods.

Effective language development tools should be used according to the age of the learner.

Five word-per-minute code is an abomination. It serves no useful purpose other than to inhibit a person's ability to learn conversational code.

The art of learning Morse Code is no different from learning any language for the first time. The brain functions are the same for both as recent research shows (I have a reference if anyone is interested). Have you seen a foreign language course that starts off teaching letters, numbers and punctuation in, say, English, French, German or Spanish?

I think we should be teaching the sound of simple words and perhaps characters at conversational speed, probably around 22-25 wpm (but 45 may be better) with no discussion of the parts of the letter. I've heard reference to research that showed that the Koch method of teaching at a straight 20 wpm resulted in faster learning times, better skill development and memory than Farnsworth.

At five or 13 wpm it is too easy to listen for dots and dashes. Dots and dashes should never be taught or discussed; it is the sound that should be taught first. When we learned "A" we didn't learn / - \, did we? We learned the sound of A. Point of fact, we didn't learn our letters and numbers and then learn words. We learned feelings and simple words that were important. We learned "mama" or "dada" first because they were important. As we got good reactions from those utterings, we began to learn more simple words and simple sentences.

We had a pretty good vocabulary before we began to learn letters and printing. Call signs are very complicated words that make no sense in a normal world. I'm beginning to think that we should be teaching code the way we teach children to talk.

Learners need lots of exposure with simple words and phrases before they go on to numbers, advanced characters and call signs. This way we could cut out a bunch of the useless steps currently required.

I'm convinced that contesters operating at high speed and in difficult conditions can

recognize who they are hearing by a variety of cues and do not always hear and decode the individual characters of call signs or other information. They know the words, the feeling and the style and use that combined information to correctly understand the sender and the message. Just as we do with voice.

Our brain is very efficient, sometimes too efficient, at filling in missing information from familiar experience. How is it that the computer comes up with the right suggested word so often? We taught it.

Five and 13 wpm code are only important if we need permit conditions. New hams who do not have to learn code, but want to, should be taught at 22-25 wpm or faster with simple words and phrases and no radio for a bit.

After they are comfortable with words and numbers-less and character-less QSOs, then introduce numbers and characters, and eventually call signs. I see few reasons why the human brain could not understand code at voice speeds.

We talk at 180 to 250 wpm. Our brains do understand. We don't listen to words according to letters. We listen to whole sounds. Reading text and reading code would be very similar. Can you imagine reading via a teleprompter that only sent characters at five wpm? You have to "see" the whole word to understand the represented sound. If you see WOM.... is the "o" a long or short vowel? It depends on the rest of the word: woman or wombat. That slows the understanding at slower speeds. At higher speeds we recognize the word not the letters. We don't waste time trying to sound the letters. At higher speeds we read the word and don't have time to guess what may be coming and trip when we are wrong.

We should be able to read code at speeds similar to our reading speed. Reading speed varies with our familiarity with the material. I read novels fast, slower if they are good and engaging, and I read technical material much slower mostly because of new words and concepts, and because I'm pondering new connections and implications as I read. I see no reason why I can't read code at 30 wpm once I get used to it. Speeds of 45-55 wpm seem doable even from my vantage point.

Try listening to voice at five wpm, or at 13 or 22 wpm. Painful! Even 25 wpm is like listening to someone with impaired ability. At 25 wpm, you need to spend 2.4 seconds saying the word "Paris". Try it! It is painful. Now just try to say "Paris" in exactly 12 seconds for five wpm. This is bunk! Why have we been putting people through this?

Try saying "mama" like you would say it to a baby you are teaching to talk. It takes under two seconds for me, and I'd probably use just slightly more than a second even if I were trying to go slow -- perhaps about 1.2 seconds. Add 20% for the fifth letter, and baby talk becomes something like 1.4 to 1.5 seconds. We are teaching babies to talk at about 40 wpm. Perhaps that is where we should be with CW.

Copying code behind is an indication that our brains are waiting for the whole item to attach specific meaning. It takes the higher speeds and comfort to begin not only to pick out the bold face meaning, but to also begin to pick up the style and the nuances of the communication, side jokes and plays on words or phrases. That is what it takes for conversational code. I have to guess, because I have not lived there yet.

I see no point to five wpm code. I don't think many five wpm code "warriors" will be of much value in an emergency situation. I suspect their cell phone will be of more use than their code. At least they may keep their cell phone in their pocket where it will be useful. I doubt they will have both their radio and a key handy. Can you imagine a five wpm Tech using two wires or an "Up/Down" mic to send an emergency message?

Perhaps an 18 wpm or faster requirement for Extra makes sense. It would separate no-code hams from those who could really have a conversation or who could accurately and quickly send and receive an emergency message. It could add a bit of prestige back to the Extra Class. Extra CLass might mean something to emergency managers or to served agencies.

Handwriting or typing skill may be a limitation to recording higher speed code, but the better secretaries and typists can hit 100-125 wpm with few or no errors. I know several who can type at errorless 100 wpm while engaging in a full conversation and acting much like top contesters on Field Day.

So I have to ask, why would anyone want to keep five or 13 word per minute code?

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YOUR ARTICLE COULD HAVE BEEN HERE!

I am always looking for good content for the JUG – especially when I have no columns from "el presidente" and "el VP/CC."

Do you have an opinion about the FCC's proposed rule changes? Have you come up with an innovative way to use full QSK in SO2R while having the switch mute the CQing radio and putting audio from the S&P radio in both ears?

What "little pistol" tricks have you discovered that even up the playing field a bit during a "big gun" dominated contest?

What can we do about the lack of activity (between contests) on the CW bands and the very real prospect of losing sub-band spectrum due to under utilization?

What do you think about Log of the World? Is it a pain to use? Should the cost of submitting LOTW QSOs toward awards be lower?

A CQP Photo Opp

Rusty establishes a new NV CQP record. (photo courtesy of Tom, K5RC)

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Check us at:
http://www.cqp.org
http://www.nccc.cc

Repeaters:
W6RGG/R 147.24+
and 444.2 (PL107.2)

FIRST CLASS