



Publication of the  
Northern California  
Contest Club



December  
2008  
Issue 439

NCCC Net  
Thursday 8 PM  
3610+/-

## Holiday Dinner and December Meeting

**Date:** Monday, 8 December 2008  
**Time:** 6pm schmooz, 6:30pm dinner  
**Location:** Michael's at Shoreline, 2960 N.  
Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View, CA

Check Website for dinner info

Please RSVP to K6EU by Friday 5 December

Pay ahead of time via PayPal or at the door.

### NCCC Officers

President: [John Miller, K6MM](#)  
Vice-President and Contest Chairman: [Jim Brown K9YC](#)  
Secretary/Treasurer: [Tom Carney, K6EU](#)

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## Zero Beat

*By John Miller, K6MM*

### ARRL November Sweepstakes

Thanks to all of you who participated in the ARRL Sweepstakes to help NCCC in our attempt to win this contest for the sixth year in a row. It was clear that NCCC showed up in force, from the Little Guns to the Big Stations, to help defend the coveted Gavel in the hotly competitive Club Competition category. "KB Power" was felt on the bands with Oldies and Newbies alike grinding out the best score they could in what is always a very demanding contest. We gave it our best shot this year, with a high level of preparation, participation, and enthusiasm.

Special thanks to these 18 club members who hosted guest operators during SS: K5RC, K6IDX, K6TD, K6XN, N6AJR, N6CK, N6RO, N6RZ, N6TV, N6XG, W6CS, W6ISO, W6JZH, W6RJ, W6SR, W6XK, WU6A, and WX6V

As we go to press with this issue of the JUG, ARRL Sweepstakes logs are still being submitted before the final deadlines. Remember, you must send in your log to ARRL to make it count for NCCC. If you haven't sent in your log yet, here are the reminders:

Deadlines:  
SS-CW = December 3 at 0300 UTC  
SS-SSB = December 17 at 0300 UTC

Before submission by email or land mail, check your log for obvious typos or other logging errors. Some obvious ones to look for are SF vs SFL, NNJ vs NNY, SD vs SDG, NL vs NLI, LA vs LAX, and OR vs ORG, etc.

The easiest way to submit your Cabrillo log is via email to the ARRL contest Robot:

For CW, send to:       SSCW@arrl.org  
For Phone send to:     SSPhone@arrl.org

For NCCC to get proper credit for your score, you must have this line anywhere in the header of your Cabrillo log file (or at the top of your paper log):

#### **CLUB: Northern California Contest Club**

When you receive a log confirmation from the ARRL robot, the club name won't appear in your verification email -- but it is always shown on the ARRL website.

If you have any problem with your logging program, please ask for help on the club email reflector – we have knowledgeable gurus on the popular logging programs who can help you.

Once the SS logs are in, we can relax. The rest is up to the log checking process, but I am proud of our collective efforts this year and regardless of the outcome, want to thank everyone for getting on the air for SS. I hope you had a great time in the 75<sup>th</sup> running of ARRL Sweepstakes!

#### **Other Contests**

By now the CQWW CW contest, which ran on Nov. 28, and 29 is complete. Did you have a good time? Work some new ones? Test out that new K3 or tri-bander? Be sure to list NCCC in your log entry.

#### **ARRL160M Contest**

Although SS and CQWW are behind us now, other challenging events arise in December, starting with the ARRL 160M

contest on December 5th. The Topband has been showing signs of life this past month. Work fellow club members to help boost their scores.

#### **ARRL10M Contest**

Up at the other end of the HF spectrum, the ARRL 10M contest starts on December 13-14. Conditions for this event are unclear, but if the band is open at all, it should be a fun contest.

#### **RAC and Stew Perry Topband Challenge**

On the last weekend of December, two interesting events occur. Radio Amateurs of Canada (RAC) challenges VEs and the rest of the world to work each other on CW and SSB, 160 thru 2m. This is always a friendly, fun event, good for both casual and hyper contesters, and is great practice for SO2R enthusiasts.

During the RAC event, the Stew Perry 160M Challenge starts, with an interesting scoring setup: QSO points are based on distance between your grid square and that of the other station. Many entry classes and awards make this a rewarding event for you insomniacs with 160M ambitions.

#### **NAQP and ARRL RTTY Roundup**

Looking even further ahead, January contests include the ARRL RTTY Roundup and NAQP, where NCCC teams have done very well in recent years.

For the ARRL RTTY Roundup on January 2/3, NCCC is going to “go for it” in this exciting contest. It will be our way for everyone to get focused on a winning strategy for the New Year.

We will have a “call-to-action” plan announced in December and ask at least 51 NCCC members to submit their logs in the Unlimited Club Competition. Many members will likely get into RTTY for the first time. To help prepare for this contest, we'll set up some practice sessions and facilitate operator-station pairings as was

done for SS. There are also helpful materials on the website available for the browsing.

There will be more on this event in the next JUG issue and on the reflector.

### November Meeting Highlights

If you weren't there, you missed a great meeting on November 8. Forty hearty and hungry Kbers showed up at the China Wok restaurant in Vallejo. They were not disappointed. First, we were treated to a really delicious dinner -- some of the best Chinese Cuisine in the Bay Area. Highly recommended dining. The main program for the evening:

1. Sweepstakes -- Following an update by K6MM on our SS-CW activity, there was a short tutorial on SSB contest operation by Bob, N6WG. Jim, K9YC also demonstrated how to set up and edit a CQ .wav file using simple, freely available, sound editing software.

2. RTTY Seminar -- Dean, N6DE and Ed, W0YK then presented an excellent overview of RTTY operation, in preparation for the January ARRL RTTY Roundup. Topics: The Club Opportunity; RTTY Basics; FSK vs AFSK; Software; Hardware; and How To Get Started.

In addition, 46 New NCCC members, who were recruited during the last month from (1) Pacificon, (2) the SS-CW weekend, and (3) individual efforts, were voted into the club.

The PowerPoint presentations for these programs have been posted in the Meetings section on our website

All in all -- another great meeting!

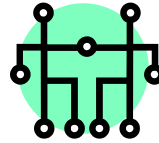
### Summary

That's it for this month. I'm looking forward

to seeing everyone at the Holiday Dinner Party in Mountain View on December 8.

KB!

73, John, K6MM



**Welcome Aboard!**

Let's all welcome these new members who were voted in at the November meeting:

**AD6YU** - Loren Singh - San Jose

**AF6YL** - Amanda Feriante

**K7GQ** - Harry Hart - Reno (NV)

**KD4HXT** - David Kalahar - Bakersfield

**KD6KVL** - Frank Wiebusch - El Verano

**KG6WHN** - Jeff Hochman - Sunnyvale

**KI6DIL** - Isaac Feriante - Fremont

**KM6I** - Gordon Good- Mountain View

**N1WDH** - Dean Cookson - Mill Valley

**N6IE** - Ronald Castro - Santa Rosa

**W6FA** - William Bridges - Nevada City

### Contests For December

*By John K6MM*

For a one-page summary of all major contests throughout the year, go to: <http://www.nccc.cc> and click on "Major Contest Calendar" at the top of the page.

For a complete 12-Month Contest Calendar go to: <http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/contestcal.html>

To download ARRL's Contest Corral, go to: <http://www.arrl.org/contests/#corral> and click on December.

NCCC Sprint: Dec 5, 12, 19

ARRL 160M Contest: Dec 5/8

ARRL 10M Contest: Dec 13/14

RAC Winter Contest: Dec 27

Stew Perry Topband: Dec 27/28

## December Meeting

Check the website for details of our next meeting, Monday December 8 in Mountain View. The December meeting is our traditional Holiday Party.

<http://www.nccc.cc/meetings.html>

## HC8A Grabs CQ WW SSB Lead

By Jamie Dupree NS3T

*(Reprinted from radio-sport.net)*

Note: Rich, N6KT and Tom, W2SC are both NCCC members

After an eight-year hiatus from the CQ WW SSB, Rich Smith N6KT seems to be well on his way to his record eighth CQ WW SSB single operator title, as the veteran champ has claimed over 14 million points from his effort at HC8A in the Galapagos Islands.

"Great contest despite difficult conditions on 10 and 15 meters!" Smith said in his 3830 report. "Best 160 meter conditions I ever heard in HC8."

Smith leads Toni Linden OH2UA, who came in at well over 11 million points from his new station CU2X in the Azores. "Without my QSO point advantage, he would have a higher score than me," Smith acknowledged. He made over 7500 QSOs at HC8A.

Only one station ended up with more than 11 million points last year and that was the winner Tom Georgens, W2SC/8P5A. This year Georgens struggled to claim over 10.7 million.

"Congratulations to Rich (HC8A) and welcome back to CQWW," Georgens wrote.

HC8A's advantage in part boiled down to 10 meters, where he brought in 544 QSOs, 10 zones and 47 countries. That's 57 multipliers CU2X had no chance at.

For those who might not be familiar with Smith, he has won CQ WW SSB a record

seven times, the last in 2000. He returned to contesting after a self-imposed absence earlier this year and promptly won ARRL DX SSB as HC8A.

It was the first time he had ever used computer logging in a 48-hour contest.

Note: Nice job, Rich!

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## VP/CC Report

Jim Brown, K9YC

Sweepstakes has come and gone, and it's time to move on to other things. Many thanks to all our members who dug in, put their butts in chairs and kept them there, or made chairs available for other ops. We know that SSB contesting is not fun for many of our members, and that doubles our appreciation.

There are some fun contests coming up in the next month. November ends with CQWW CW, and depending on when you read this, it may be history. It's basically a DX contest – you need to work a few US stations to get a zone or country multiplier, but you get zero QSO points for in your own country. And you may not need to work US stations for the mult if you have worked a VE in that zone. Exchange is RST and zone, work stations once per band, mults are countries and zones, and mults count on each band. Qs count 3 points for a different continent, 2 pts for other North American countries (so VE, XE, etc. count 2 pts).

December is a great month to learn contesting and/or build your skills. December begins with one of my favorite contests, ARRL 160 (Dec 5-7). This CW-only contest attracts a lot of activity, and you don't necessarily need a big signal to have fun. That's because most serious 160M operators have some sort of low-noise receive antennas so that they can pull weak signals out of the noise. An important tip when you're a weak signal is to call multiple

times so that the operator can switch between one or more RX antennas to dig you out.

You do need a decent receiver, because 160M is going to sound like 20M, and if your transmitter is putting out trash, you'll hear about it in a hurry! If you've got both a vertical and a dipole, switch between them to see what works best to any given station you're calling. During the daylight hours and for at least an hour or so of darkness, a good vertical is almost always a lot better, while the dipole may be better to some QTHs at night. Also, pay attention to QSB. The same relatively fast fading we hear on the higher bands is much slower on 160M, where the difference between a peak and a null is often a minute or more. And DX openings are often a lot like the sun peeking thorough a small hole in the clouds as they drift across the sky. For example, when we're hearing EU, stations as little as 300 miles away may not be. If you're in an ARRL or VE section you work everybody. Other stations work only W/VE. The exchange is RST and ARRL/RAC section. DX sends only RST.

Also Dec 5-6 is the TARA RTTY Melee, a great warmup for the RTTY Roundup. This is a 24 hour contest, operate 16 hours, with time off in no more than two 4 hour blocks. Everyone works everyone, exchange is RST and State/Province, mults are state/province/territories/countries. Work stations once per band (160-10, no WARC), mults count only once. Cluster use is permitted. If you're going to work RTTY Round Up (and we hope you will), spending at least a few hours in this contest is almost a must! Homer, K6XX's RTTY op, says it's even fun if you drink enough beer!

ARRL 10M comes along Dec 13-14, the week after ARRL 160. You can operate the 10M contest on CW, SSB, or both. It can be a lot of fun if the band opens much (it was open for most of the contest in 2006 and I worked 45 states and more than 20 countries) but deadly dull if it doesn't (there

were only a few brief openings in 2007, and I worked only a dozen mults) and if you miss them, you lose. Everyone works everyone. W/VE exchange is RST and state/province. DX exchange is RST and serial number. Mults are states plus provinces plus countries. Work each station one on CW and once SSB. CW Qs count 4 points, SSB Qs count 2 points.

December 27 is the RAC Winter contest, CW and voice. Everyone works everyone, but Qs with VE stations count 10 points while Qs with anyone else count 2 points. Qs with VE club stations (RAC suffix) count 20 points. Mults are VE provinces and territories (13 total). Work the same station once on each mode and on each band. This is also a fun contest, and generates a fair amount of activity. Using the cluster makes you a multiop.

December 27-28 brings another great 160M contest, the Stew Perry DX Challenge. This 24 hour contest (1500Z – 1500Z) is quite different, and makes it easier for stations located almost anywhere to be competitive independent of location. Operate for 14 hours maximum, exchange is your gridsquare. Each QSO is scored based on the other station's power and the distance between the center of your gridsquares. The only mult is for your TX power – 3 for 5 watts, 1.5 for 100w, 1 for more than 100 watts. Spotting is not permitted; Skimmer is permitted, but makes you a multi-op.

The New Year starts with a bang – RTTY Roundup 10 am Jan 5 to 4 pm Jan 6, operate 24 hours max. We're making this a target contest this year, and we think we can win it if enough of our members will fire up on RTTY and contribute. Packet is permitted, but it makes you multi-op. Multi-ops are allowed only 6 band changes/hour, so you can't do SO2R and use packet! Exchange is RST and State/Province, or RST and serial number if you're DX. Everyone works everyone, mults are states + provinces + countries, and count only once, but you can work a station on each band (80-10M). If

you're planning to work this contest, especially if you're new to RTTY, consider putting some time in during TARA RTTY (Dec 5-6).

That's it for now. Be sure to call for help with any ham radio projects – antennas, new station setups, new logging software, contest mentoring, guest operating opportunities. Have a great holiday season, and enjoy contesting!

73, Jim K9YC

### Members in Action

### CQP 2008



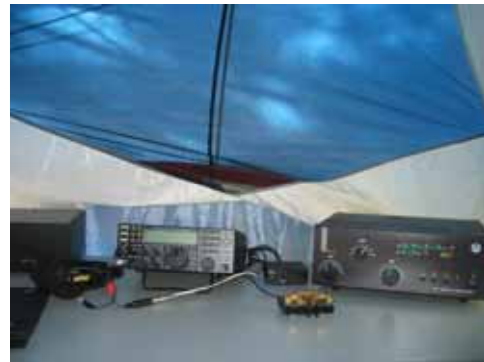
Mobile = W6OAT & K5RC



Kings = K6VVA & NI6T



Alpine: N6A = K6DGW, W4UAT, W6OA, KQ6DI, KF6VU



Tuolumne: N6DE



Tehama: N6RNO = NO6X, K6MI, WB6HYD, N3ZZ, K6VLF



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