



**Publication of the
Northern California
Contest Club**



**August
2011**

Issue 471

NCCC Net
Thursday 8 PM
3610+/-

[Guests are always welcome at the NCCC! Please join us.](#)

Monday, August 8, 2011

Program

Comparison of Four Post-Contest Log Analyzers
(John, K6MM)

CQP 2012 (Rhino, N6RNO)

Date: Monday, 8th August 2011

Time: 6:00pm schmooze, 7:00pm dinner, 7:30pm program

Location: Cattlemens

2882 Kitty Hawk Road

Livermore, CA 94551

Telephone [\(925\) 447-1224](tel:9254471224)

Directions are on their web site:

<http://www.cattlemensrestaurants.com/liv.htm>

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From the President

The Road to WRTC and a generous group of KB'ers

I'd like to take a moment to thank all the KB'ers who generously donated money to support WRTC 2014. Most contesters realize that this is our Olympics, yet in accordance with most amateur traditions, is self funded and not for profit. No huge sponsorships, etc. Just a serious bunch of competitive radio-sport operators who K'd B for the previous 4 years to earn their place in one of the operator tents. Its these tents our money is going to support, and our NCCC logo will be on one tent for each \$1000 we were able to muster up (over 2k now). Many other amateur club logo's will be on tents as well, letting us and the world know that competitive radio-sport is alive and well!

A reminder... Did you make your goal and earn a SS 2010 limited 40th anniversary shirt?

For those who did earn a SS 2010 shirt (if your not sure please contact me), I will be bringing them along for the next several meetings, and issuing these very attractive shirts. So another great reason to attend our monthly meetings! I am looking forward to hearing about CQP 2011, as well as very interesting log comparison software at Cattlemans, in Livermore. I hope to see you there!

Pacificon is coming.. Can you help?

Our annual booth at pacificon will be taken up a notch this year, with a new venue in San Jose. We can really use some KB'ers to step up to the plate, staff the booth and let our fellow northern Californians know who the NCCC is, how to get started in contesting, and become part of the best Amateur RadioSport organization in the world! if you can help, please send an email to either myself or John Miller, K6MM.

On that note, the year marches forward. I hope to see you at the next meeting, and work you on the air in the next Test!

73 es KB

Chris N6WM
President

VP/CC Corner

Hello Fellow Contesters!

This month, I want to talk about keyboarding, but first, fasten your seatbelts and then click on this link. (While you're watching and listening, note what appears to be a bottle of CQP wine on top of the monitor.)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0cOfAixTWDI>

An equally boffo performance by N6BV without video is here

http://www.nccc.cc/members/ss_2006/n6bv_ssph_2001.zip

Neither George nor Dean could achieve those super rates without great keyboarding skills. One flubbed keystroke and the whole rhythm goes down the drain.

Is keyboarding a weak link in your contesting-skills chain? How can we improve our keyboarding?

1. If you're a hunt-and-peck typist, learn to touch type. It's well worth the effort. Google "typing tutor" for on-line lessons.
2. For combined CW practice and keyboarding practice try one or both of the following

<http://www.rufzxp.net/>

<http://dxatlas.com/morserunner/>

Rufz and Morse Runner are great practice tools. I often use them to warm up for a contest. With both, you not only have to copy the CW correctly, you also have to type it correctly.

3. If you operate RTTY contests, try using the keyboard more instead of clicking on calls and exchanges. It's a good change of pace, and it's great keyboarding practice that will carry over to CW and SSB.

If your keyboarding skills are not what they could be, do something, anything about it. Get out of the rut. Improved keyboarding will result in less contest frustration, more points, and more fun.

The first rule of contesting is to have fun—Contest Exuberantly!

73,

Hank, W6SX

NCCC July Meeting

The summer months may be a less contest active time but there are plenty of time pressures that can get in the way of Ham Radio activities such as making it to the monthly NCCC meeting! With that in mind, your Editor's thought to include a write up of the NCCC July meeting so you can catch up on what you missed!



The NCCC July meeting was held at El Burro Restaurant in Newark and was attended by about 40 people.

One of the folks who did make it to the July meeting was Tom McShane NW6P aided by his long time friend and chauffeur Garry, NI6T.

It was wonderful to see Tom back at the NCCC meeting after a many month recuperation from the stroke that laid him low late last year!

Tom looked great and is recovering well – a testament to his courage and the fantastic support of all his friends and family.

We look forward to having Tom back on the air and participating with Team NCCC!

Chris N6WM called the meeting to order snazzily dressed in his NCCC 40th anniversary, limited edition Sweepstakes t-shirt – these shirts were awarded to NCCC members who beat their 2009 combined Sweepstakes score by at least 100 Q's for 2010.

The t-shirts were handed out to the award recipients who made the meeting – contact Chris if you were eligible for a t-shirt but didn't make the meeting!

After introductions and an affirmative vote on new members, Stu K6TU gave an update on the fund-raising for NCCC and its WRTC 2014 sponsorship as well as another reminder that annual NCCC dues are now DUE!!!!

The meeting moved into the presentation section with a well-illustrated talk by Jim K9YC of his DXpedition/contest expedition to Bonaire (PJ4A) for CQ WW CW 2010.

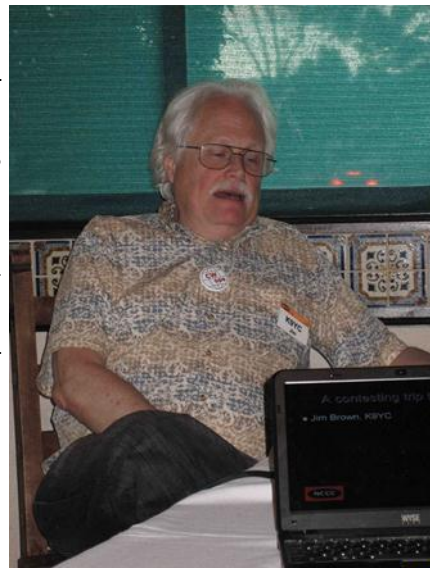


Jim and his fellow operators (John K4BAI, Jeff KU8E and NCCC's own Tom N3ZZ) put in a claimed score of 24,675,840 points which as them as #2 in the World and #1 in South America in the unofficial results for the contest up on the web.

Their QTH on Bonaire is a house set up for the contester – Jim's presentation showed a good selection of antennas, a lot of rugged bushes through which the team had to pull Beverage antennas for the low bands and some island highways (dirt roads!).

Jim highlighted some of the attractions (good propagation, lots of multipliers) of operating from PJ4 as well as some of the challenges such as travel logistics and high shipping costs making it difficult to ship state-of-the-art radio equipment to the island.

A great achievement! Well done Jim and team!



The final presentation of the night was by Dave Bottom, W16R of Arlan Communications (<http://www.arlancommunications.com/>) - designers and manufacturers of high quality headsets.

Dave gave a great presentation on the origins of Arlan's range of headsets designed for the Ham Radio community – the company leveraged its expertise in making rugged headsets for more than 2 million users in the public safety, aircraft, and industrial sectors.



Several headsets were passed around as Dave covered the company's products – the headsets are well made, light weight and have a range of options including different microphone inserts and cables specially tailored for Ham Radio operators.

Dave and his company have been great listeners to the feedback from the Ham community and factoring this back into their product development.

If you are in the market for a new headset, Arlan Communications is worth a serious look!

K6TU's Tech Tips

We got some positive feedback on the inclusion of Stu's article about a broadband 80m dipole antenna in last month's JUG. So, we thought we'd try including more tech-tips from time to time.

If you have any particular tips that might be helpful to your fellow contesters in the NCCC, please send them along to Stu K6TU with pictures where possible/relevant!

TT #1 – Slaying the Birdies!

No, this isn't about keeping birds off your tower...

Even in semi-rural Woodside, there are plenty of spurious signals (aka "birdies") that pollute our HF bands. When the odd spare moment of time coincides with a phase of great personal motivation, I go "birdie" hunting in a never-ending quest to clean up the noise.

The summer months have resulted in some good openings on 6m and I'd taken to keeping the FlexRadio 5000 and its panadaptor tuned to 6m when working in my home office. I can easily keep a single eye on a 192 KHz swath of the band and look to see whether the band is open.

Sadly, I had a LOT of birdies on 6m and it really meant that the "single eye" was more than just a glance as deleting the birdies from view required a conscious effort.

The majority of the birdies didn't change much (if any!) as I turned the antenna so it was clear that these were likely direct pick up in the room where the radio gear lives. This wasn't a total surprise as the Ethernet cables are in close proximity with the antenna cables.

Basic trouble shooting (turning everything off but the radio) quickly showed these birdies were coming from the Ethernet switch AND some of the equipment plugged into it.

The first step was to grab a few large #31 mix ferrite rings and wrap the Ethernet cables into nice common mode chokes. I'd looked at Jim K9YC's paper on RFI issues and his measured response of multi-turn chokes on #31 mix still showed about 1000 ohms of common mode impedance at 50 MHz.

BTW, Jim's paper (<http://www.audiosystemsgroup.com/RFI-Ham.pdf>) is a "must-read" if you haven't seen it and are tackling RFI problems – whether you or on the transmitting or receiving end of the problems.

The common mode chokes nailed one clear culprit (the Web controller power switch I'd picked up from HSC to handle remote AC power control) but the rest stubbornly remained.



The second step was replacing the el-cheapo plastic housed Gigabit Ethernet switch with a more substantial one from Netgear – housed in a metal box – in this case a Netgear DS108 which retails for about \$90 at Fry's...

Swapping the plastic boxed unit for the Netgear instantly nailed the birdies by about 20 dB but their reduced level still left gray ghosts on my panadaptor. I was not through yet!

A(nother) trip to Fry's procured some SHIELDED Ethernet cables – yes, they do carry them and they cost about a buck more than the regular cables.

They come in bags labeled SHIELDED and have metal head shells that provide electrical continuity for the braid on the cable from end to end.

Even without grounding the case of the Netgear switch, replacing the regular Ethernet cables (even with their #31 common mode choke) took all the remaining birdies below the noise floor on the panadaptor.



Shielded Ethernet cables aren't a cure all but worth a try if you are stuck with some stubborn RFI problems.

As an aside, even running full legal limit, I don't have any problems with the computer gear or the Ethernet gear getting whacked by RF.

!!NCCC Dues Reminder!!

Despite our success with fund raising to cover the WRTC sponsorship, we still need to collect NCCC annual dues as these go towards covering the club's annual operating expenses.

If you haven't already paid your \$24 dues for 2011-2012, please visit the membership page on the NCCC web site at <http://www.nccc.cc/membership.html> - you can pay your dues here by credit card or PayPal.

The club roster at <http://www.nccc.cc/members/roster-online.html> shows the current status of dues as well as providing a handy contact reference if you need to contact an NCCC member and need their phone number or email address.

NCCC welcomes new members!

A big welcome and hearty KB to our 4 new members who joined us at the July NCCC meeting!

Our latest members are:

Tom Kenville W6TJK from Felton, CA. Tom runs Elecraft K3 and Collins S line equipment and his favorite contest is CQP!

Chris Hoffman KG6O from San Carlos, CA. Chris operates mostly mobile using an FT879 and is an avid CW contester.

Glen Brown W6GJB from Santa Cruz, CA. Glen has a full stable of Elecraft gear including KX1, K1, K2 and K3. He operates CW, PSK and RTTY – his favorite contest is WPX and IARU.

Howard (“Phil”) Hoyt AG6FU (ex KJ6ELO) from Berkeley, CA. Phil has an Icom 718 and operates at W6YX SSB – now working on his CW.

NCCC Fund Raising Update

Thanks to everyone’s great generosity, we have already blown through the \$2000 goal we aimed for back in June 2011 to cover NCCC’s sponsorship of WRTC 2014 and to bolster the club’s general fund.

Between the funds contributed directly to NCCC and donations made via NCDXF by NCCC members, we have so far raised \$3100!

It’s not too late if you still wish to make a donation – either directly to Tom N3ZZ for NCCC or as a contribution via NCDXF – contact Rusty W6OAT for details on this route.

We hope you read the



With no Arbitron panel or Alexa stats to provide feedback, we don’t know how many of you read the JUG!

The Editors (Ian W6TCP & Stu K6TU) would love to get your feedback be it positive or negative.

- What kinds of things would you like to see covered in the JUG?
- Got a new piece of equipment? Can we get you to write a review?
- Contest or Convention experience? How about some pictures or a short writeup?

Please send your ideas, contributions, pictures, money or beer... to the Editors!

California QSO Party

October 1-2, 2011
1600 UTC Oct 1 to 2200 UTC Oct 2

The California QSO Party (CQP) is the premier state QSO party held every year on the first week-end of October. The Northern California Contest Club ([NCCC](#)) has sponsored CQP since 1974. CQP has traditionally opened the annual contest season by providing an opportunity for contesters to prepare for the ARRL November Sweepstakes since the format is similar.

Stations outside of California, worldwide, work stations in California only. The 58 counties of CA are the [multipliers](#). California stations work all stations in or out of CA. The 50 US states and 8 Canadian provinces are the multipliers. Stations outside of Canada and the US add to one's QSO total but do not count as multipliers. See the full set of [CQP Rules](#) for more details.

On this site you will find lots of information, so peruse the index above and learn all about the California QSO Party! Also, be sure to visit the [NCCC](#) website for the latest scoop on a super contest club.

- **Before CQP:**
- **Sign-up for the 2011 CQP** (Sign ups will be accepted beginning around August 1st, 2011).
- [Read The 2011 Rules](#)
- [Read CQP Operating Strategy](#), by K6RB

- **After CQP**
- Submit your log no later than Monday, October 31, 2011
- The preferred method is to use the web server for submitting your contest log. Go to this URL and follow the instructions: logs.cqp.org
- After you submit your log, you can check to be sure it's listed on the CQP server here: <http://cqplogs.appspot.com/claimed.jsp>
- T-Shirts - Like the wine, each year's T-shirt is a special vintage. For 2011 the color is Brown. Place your order for a T-shirt by sending an email to info@cqp.org stating the sizes and quantities for each size (M/L/XL/XXL/XXXL), the call sign of the CQP operation, the call sign of the person placing the order, and the address to ship to. All orders are due by January 15th. T-Shirts will ship in March. Send payment, \$15 (\$20 for DX entries), either via PayPal to paypal@nccc.cc, or a check to NCCC, 3572 Amherst Court, Mountain View CA 94040.

Many NCCers contribute to making the CQP a success.

Questions? Visit the NCCC website [here](#).



Contest Calendar—August page 1

ARS Spartan Sprint	0100Z-0300Z, Aug 2
QRP Fox Hunt	0100Z-0230Z, Aug 5
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Aug 5
TARA Grid Dip Shindig	0000Z-2400Z, Aug 6
10-10 Int. Summer Contest, SSB	0001Z, Aug 6 to 2359Z, Aug 7
European HF Championship	1200Z-2359Z, Aug 6
North American QSO Party, CW	1800Z, Aug 6 to 0600Z, Aug 7
ARRL UHF Contest	1800Z, Aug 6 to 1800Z, Aug 7
RSGB RoPoCo CW	0700Z-0830Z, Aug 7
SARL HF Phone Contest	1300Z-1630Z, Aug 7
NAQCC Straight Key/Bug Sprint	0030Z-0230Z, Aug 10
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, Aug 10 and 1900Z-2000Z, Aug 10 and 0300Z-0400Z, Aug 11
NAQCC-EU Monthly Sprint	1800Z-2000Z, Aug 10
RSGB 80m Club Sprint, CW	1900Z-2030Z, Aug 10
MMMonVHF/DUBUS 144 MHz Meteorscatter Sprint Contest	0000Z, Aug 12 to 2359Z, Aug 13
QRP Fox Hunt	0100Z-0230Z, Aug 12
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Aug 12
WAE DX Contest, CW	0000Z, Aug 13 to 2359Z, Aug 14
Maryland-DC QSO Party	1600Z, Aug 13 to 0400Z, Aug 14 and 1600Z-2400Z, Aug 14
SKCC Weekend Sprint	0000Z-2400Z, Aug 14
QRP Fox Hunt	0100Z-0230Z, Aug 19
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Aug 19
SARTG WW RTTY Contest	0000Z-0800Z, Aug 20 and 1600Z-2400Z, Aug 20 and 0800Z-1600Z, Aug 21



Contest Calendar—August page 2

ARRL 10 GHz and Up Contest	0600 local, Aug 20 to 2400 local, Aug 21
Russian District Award Contest	0800Z, Aug 20 to 0800Z, Aug 21
CWops CW Open	1200Z-1559Z, Aug 20 and 2000Z-2359Z, Aug 20 and 0400Z-0759Z, Aug 21
North American QSO Party, SSB	1800Z, Aug 20 to 0600Z, Aug 21
Feld Hell Sprint	2000Z-2200Z, Aug 20
Keyman's Club of Japan Contest	1200Z, Aug 21 to 1200Z, Aug 22
SARL Digital Contest	1300Z-1600Z, Aug 21
ARRL Rookie Roundup, RTTY	1800Z-2359Z, Aug 21
Run for the Bacon QRP Contest	0100Z-0300Z, Aug 22
SKCC Sprint	0000Z-0200Z, Aug 24
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, Aug 24 and 1900Z-2000Z, Aug 24 and 0300Z-0400Z, Aug 25
RSGB 80m Club Sprint, SSB	1900Z-2030Z, Aug 25
QRP Fox Hunt	0100Z-0230Z, Aug 26
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Aug 26
ALARA Contest	0400Z-1359Z, Aug 27 and 0400Z-1359Z, Aug 28
0400Z-1359Z, Aug 28	0700Z, Aug 27 to 2200Z, Aug 28
Hawaii QSO Party	1200Z, Aug 27 to 1200Z, Aug 28
YO DX HF Contest	1200Z, Aug 27 to 1159Z, Aug 28
SCC RTTY Championship	1400Z, Aug 27 to 0200Z, Aug 28 and 1400Z-2000Z, Aug 28
Kansas QSO Party	1500Z-1800Z, Aug 27
ARCI Welcome to QRP	1600Z, Aug 27 to 0400Z, Aug 28
Ohio QSO Party	1300Z-1600Z, Aug 28
SARL HF CW Contest	

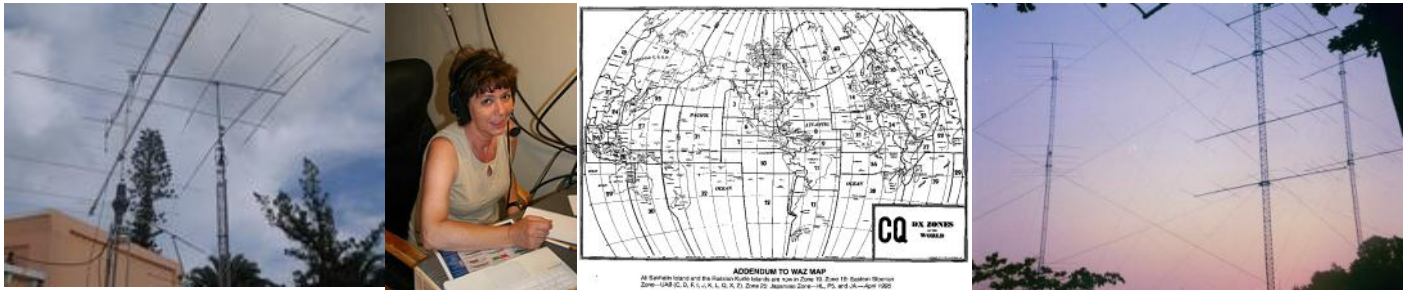


Please consider writing an article for JUG !

September Newsletter Deadline—August 28th

This is your newsletter so lets make it something were proud of. I hope you will consider writing an article for the JUG! Whether its about your station, recent contest experience or a technical article we would appreciate hearing from you.

Send your articles to Ian W6TCP w6tcp@comcast.net and Stu K6TU stu@ridgelift.com



12 STORE BUYING POWER



- IC-7000** All Mode Transceiver
- 160-10M/6M/2M/70CM
 - 2x DSP
 - Digital IF filters
 - Digital voice recorder
 - 2.5" color TFT display
 - 503 memory channels
 - Remote control mic



- IC-7700** Transceiver. The Contester's Rig
- HF + 6m operation
 - +40dBm ultra high intercept point
 - IF DSP, user defined filters
 - 200W output power full duty cycle
 - Digital voice recorder



- IC-7600** All Mode Transceiver
- 100W HF/6m Transceiver, gen cov. receiver
 - Dual DSP 32 bit
 - Three roofing filters- 3, 6, 15khz
 - 5.8 in WVGA TFT display
 - Hi-res real time spectrum scope



- IC-7800** All Mode Transceiver
- 160-6M @ 20W
 - Four 32 bit IF-DSPs
 - + 24 bit AD/DA converters
 - Two completely identical, independent receivers
 - +40dBm 3rd order intercept point
 - And much more!

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