



Publication of the
Northern California
Contest Club



Issue 581

December 2020



JUG Editor: Bill, N6ZFO n6zfo@arrl.net 415 209-3084

NCCC - 50 years of Contesting Excellence

Inside this Issue:

	Page
President's Report — WD6T	1
About the NCCC	2
Courage in Radio Contesting—The Inspiring Story of Tom McShane, NW6P	4
Adapt or Perish—Station Ergonomics WD6T	7
Ergonomic Considerations for the Contest Station, John Thompson, K3MD	10
The Last Non-Digital QSO, K3MD	13
Point Generator Profile, N6JS by W1RH	14
Tube of the Month, Eimac 4-250A . N6JV	16
NCCC Information	17
HRO Advertisement	18

**NCCC December 2020 ZOOM Meeting
Presented on Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2020**

"RTTY Techniques"

Ed Muns, WOYK

Ed's comprehensive discussion of RTTY contesting in preparation for the upcoming RTTY Roundup, with comments on the possible importance of FT8/4.

Ed's slide deck can be viewed on the member's-only RTTY Contesting page:

<http://nccc.cc/members/rttycontesting.html>

<http://nccc.cc/members/pdf/WOYK-RTTYRU-15Dec2020.pdf>

President's Report - WD6T

Announcing Two New NCCC-Sponsored WPX Plaques

Last month, I laid out some ideas for how we can enhance West Coast contesting despite our geographical and propagation challenges. I mentioned the possibility of new regional award overlays for the major DX contests. These allow us to compete against each other and those in our region, even if the contest as a whole is largely out of our reach for geographical reasons. I mentioned that, in addition to several national plaques, we currently support several regional plaques, including ARRL RTTY Roundup Pacific Division SOHP, CQ Worldwide SSB SOHP Zone 3, and CQ WPX CW SOHP Zone 3.

I am happy to announce that beginning with the 2021 WPX contest NCCC will be sponsoring two new plaques, representing brand new competitions. These have been approved as official CQ plaques and will be awarded for the first time in 2021. They are both extremely challenging for us to win, but not out of the realm of possibility. CQ WPX was chosen because, of the major DX contests, it is the least skewed towards the East Coast and Europe. Nevertheless, we remain at a disadvantage due to the location of the major ham population centers, as well as the particular prefix allocations in various countries; look at the number of prefixes in Germany, for example. Therefore, we have chosen the focus of these new plaques to be on California. The two new plaques are are:

1. Top California WPX double play score - combined SSB + CW
2. Top California WPX triple play score - combined SSB + CW + RTTY

It is important to point out that CQ has a rule that the same log cannot win two plaques. So, if one operator has both t

President's Report Continues on Page 3



Northern California Contest Club

Excellence In Amateur Radio Contesting

Officers:

President	David Jaffe	WD6T	k6daj@arrl.net
Vice President /Contest Chair	Bill Fehring	W9KKN	bill+nccc@w9kkn.net
Treasurer	Tom Carney	K6EU	treasurer.nccc@gmail.com
Secretary	Gary Johnson	NA6O	secretary.nccc@gmail.com
Past President	Jack Brindle	W6FB	jackbrindle@me.com
Director	Bob Wolbert	K6XX	K6XX@arrl.net
Director:	Bob Cox	K3EST	bobk3est@gmail.com
Director:	Rich Smith	N6KT	n6kt1@sbcglobal.net

Volunteers:

Charter Member	Rusty Epps	W6OAT	w6oat@sbcglobal.net
Awards Chair	Gary Johnson	NA6O	gwj@wb9jps.com
CQP Chair	Glen Brown	W6GJB	210glen@gmail.com
K6ZM QSL Manager	George Daughters	K6GT	k6gt@arrl.net
K6CQP,N6CQP,W6CQP QSL Mgr	Ed Muns	W0YK	w0yk@arrl.net
NCCC Email reflector Admin	Phil Verinsky	W6PK	kb-w6tqg@verinsky.com
Webmaster	John Miller	K6MM	k6mm@arrl.net
Webinars	Bill Fehring	W9KKN	bill+nccc@w9kkn.net
JUG Editor	Bill Haddon	N6ZFO	n6zfo@arrl.net

Thursday Night Sprint:

The Northern California Contest Club sponsors a Thursday Night Contesting session of thirty minutes duration.

Often, on Fridays prior to a major contest weekend, a special practice session is held.

Generally, on Thursday evenings, a special format is followed, called NS or "NCCC Sprint". The NS began in the summer of 2004 as a snappy, concise contest occurring most Thursday nights, North American time. The power limit is 100 watts. Occasionally multi-week ladder competitions are held. See www.ncccsprint.com for details.

Thursday Night Contesting Director and Founder	Bill, N6ZFO
NCCC CW Sprint	Tom, N3ZZ (initially, Ken N6RO)
NCCC RTTY Sprint	Ken, K6MR
NCCC Sprint Ladder	Bill, N6ZFO
Sprint Web master www.ncccsprint.com	John, K6MM
Ladder Scores Manager	Tim N3QE
Thursday night Contesting Advisory Group:	N6ZFO, Bill (Chair)
	Mark K6UFO, (with W4NZ, N4AF, W9RE, K4BAI, N3BB, VE3YT and W0BH).
	Ken, N6RO
The Thursday night NCCC Net	



the highest double play and triple play score, he or she would win only the triple play plaque and the double play would go to the next highest scoring operator.

Why limit these plaques to California, given that the NCCC CQ circle extends into Nevada and Oregon? We considered using Zone 3, but it extends so far east and north that it would drastically limit our ability to compete. Even restricting the range to California is extremely competitive as there are a number of well-known super-stations and contesters in Southern California who will certainly give us a run for our money. The goal with these plaques is to create something that is challenging, but not impossible for us. The bottom line is that limiting it to California is the best compromise out of a number of imperfect options.

What about multi-operator categories? It turns out that CQ has a rule that there must be at least twenty submitted logs in the category, which is not the case for MS, M2 or MM in California.

We hope that NCCC members agree that these plaques are a positive step for California contesting. In addition, we hope they will inspire other West Coast clubs to sponsor regional plaques and further the goal of maximizing engagement, excitement, competitiveness, and fun from the left coast (right coast, if you're facing VP6.)

Meanwhile, bang, bang, bang, one big contest after another. And it ain't over until the inverted L sings. Old Sol has awoken from his slumber, as we experienced in CQ WW CW, with 15 meters the best it's been in years, and 10 meters beginning to open to places other than Chile. The ARRL 10 Meter Contest was interesting this year. Go forth and get multipliers!

73, Dave WD6T



Courage in Radio Contesting . . . The Inspiring Story of Tom J. McShane, NW6P

Ed. Note. In 2010 Tom, NW6P suffered a major life-threatening health event which most certainly should have ended Tom's exemplary ham radio career. Through several years of courageous, dedicated efforts to recover, Tom has returned as an NCCC contester, operating his own station NW6P, and opening his first-rate station to literally dozens of other contesters competing in major events. This story, in Tom's words, evokes admiration and praise from all of us in the NCCC. Many NCCC members helped Tom over the past ten years, attesting to the spirit and dedication of our membership,. Among them are W6RGG, W0YK, W6EB, WX5S and W9KKN, who have had special roles in Tom's recovery.

I was first licensed in New Jersey as W2TOD in 1957. My best friend was Garry Shapiro. We both went to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. I came to California in 1967. I had a new wife and started a family and couldn't get back to radio until 1982. By that time Garry was NI6T and I was NW6P.

I was looking at all the NCCC messages about the Sprint. I was amazed with these super scores. I hated the Sprint in the beginning. It was so difficult for me that I was about to give up but Bob Vallio, W6RRG insisted that I will do better and with time. Bob said it just takes practice. He came to my QTH to do the Sprint to show me how it was done. With his encouragement I actually got to the point where I liked it. I think my best score was close to 9000 but then I had a massive stroke 10 years ago and I can't do it anymore.

I was taking Coumadin, a blood thinner to help prevent a stroke. I had no problem with the medication but it required a visit to the doctor each month to make sure that I was getting the right dose. My cardiologist said he wanted to put me on a new drug called Pradaxa that didn't require the office visits. It turned out that there was a lot of interaction with other medications that I was taking. 1400 people died and 4500 stroked out like me. That was at the end of January 2010.



Tom, NW6P

I spent a month and El Camino Hospital. Although I could babble a little I had no idea what I was saying. Basically it was like being in a coma. I was transferred to a facility where I could be taken care of. Three months later I saw my doctor in the room whom I recognized and asked what are you doing Dr. Chin? To save my life the doctor had to disable my right leg. It was better than amputation. With rehabilitation I learned how to speak and walk using a cane. A month later I was home, ready for physical therapy and occupational therapy.

Christmas 2009 I was given a K-3 by my wife. It was in kit form and my friend Jim Abraham W6EB built it for me. I was just learning how to use the new radio when I had my stroke. Before I got sick I spoke German some Russian and some Yiddish. Post-stroke I barely spoke English. One day Jim said let's turn on the K3 and see if I could copy CW. Wow! My CW was still there! Matt WX5S said he would make an Excel spreadsheet with macros so that I could work DX and contests.

Ed W0YK came to my place to show me how to operate my new radio using RTTY. It didn't take long until I was able to operate in RTTY contests.

Everything was getting better each week. We took a family vacation to Hawaii. My son Steve and I saw that my wife was coughing all the time. We said when we get home we have to find out what's going on. It turns out that my wife of 47 years had lung cancer and died within six months of diagnosis.

I decided that I would exercise as a way of escaping this tragic event. I was going to the gym with the trainer three days and then later five days a week. On weekends I invited contesters to operate NW6P. The base of my tower is 350 feet above San Francisco Bay and my nine yagi's and 80m dipole play really well with the K-3 and Alpha 87.

International hams have operated here, including Kim OH6KZP, Sandy DL1QQ, Michael Zurch DG1CMZ, and many more. I think 25+ NCCC members have operated NW6P. Bill W9KKN and I have taught several hams to operate in contests from here. Bill figured out SO2R and how to operate remotely. Now several folks use the station on remote basis. David WD6T is a frequent user. My helper Rafael KG6DQL is setting up his San Jose station to use NW6P.

So as you can see the station is quite active and I hope to do that for a long time.

73, Tom NW6P



Tom , NW6P and XYL



NW6P with friend and NCCC member Garry Shapiro, NI6T



Tom at the NW8P Amp



*The NW6P high band antenna farm. . .
And you wonder why he's loud.*



Tom, Celebrating another contest victory performance, this time with contesting partner Matt, WX6S. A familiar face appears in the background.



With NCCC VP/CC Bill, W9KKN, whose station building assistance has had major impact on the NW6P station performance. NW6P is now remotely accessible.



No doubt antennas were the discussion topic prior to this photo. . .NW6P with antenna experts Hector, XE2K and Kurt, K7NV

Adapt or Perish - Station Ergonomics

David A Jaffe, WD6T

BIC

One of the most important element in contesting is putting in the time, "BIC" aka "Butt in Chair." We know which butt. But which chair? Just as a high performance radio and great antennas are important for success, so is an ergonomic setup that can keep your body in good shape. As I am someone who required carpal tunnel syndrome surgery from violin playing at age 19 (I quit my lessons at age 12 and then developed some bad bow hold habits...don't do that!), and who has struggled with lower back pain for forty years (don't ask about the time that I was playing a gig at a gym and decided to see if I could do a flip on the rings), I'm no stranger to repetitive stress injuries. Working in the computer industry as a software engineer involves a lot of sitting, so I've had to figure out how to minimize my back and arm pain. I've cultivated active hobbies and avoided those in which I had to sit... and then contesting stole my heart. This has forced me to take seriously the issue of station ergonomics. While I am no expert on the subject, I can say what has worked for me.

Sit/Stand Desk



My first important realization was that "BIC" doesn't require sitting. There's no reason you can't stand up while contesting. Or lie down, for that matter. It's all a matter of setting up your station in a flexible manner. My first "standing desk" consisted of no more than a few pillows with the keyboard sitting on top. After several years of rotating between sitting and standing by moving the pillows back and forth, I finally invested in a sit/stand desk. This is a motorized device that allows rapid adjustment to any height. In fact, I can lower it so far that I can work or operate kneeling on the ground. In a long contest, I will rotate between sitting, standing and kneeling, as any one position held for too long can become painful. It also makes it easy to match the desk height to the position of the chair. (I did notice, however, that the motor creates RFI, but changing the height happens only occasionally.)

Multi-dimensional Chair

Modifying the chair position over the course of the contest can also be helpful. It is important to have a chair that adjusts in as many dimensions as possible. Height is important. But so is the seat angle. I prefer tilting the seat backwards so that it takes the vertical pressure off my back. However, unless your chair has a headrest, leaning backwards can put pressure on your neck, so watch out for that. Leaning back, it is also possible to hold the keyboard on your lap. This can be quite comfortable. It is best to have a chair with armrests, and these should be easily adjustable in height. Sitting with your feet on the ground is best for your back. If this is not possible, a footrest may be useful. A footrest can also be used as a "bar stool" in which you raise one foot to relieve lower back pressure while standing. This is my preferred orientation for contesting while standing.

WD6T at sit/stand desk, with foot stool to relieve back pressure.

Keyboards

I recently developed severe tendonitis and started exploring ergonomic keyboards. I have several that can be split in half and tilted like a tent. This avoids the need to turn the wrists inward. In addition, the split keyboards can be separated so your arms extend straight from your elbows instead of tilting inwards, as they are required to do with ordinary keyboards. In fact, when I do SO2R, I use two such keyboards, one in front of the other.



Double split keyboard for SO2R.



Concave keyboard with common keys moved to thumb.

Vertical mouse, for more natural hand position.

Double split keyboard for SO2R.

For writing code, I've found that the most comfortable keyboard is the unusual Kinesis 2, which has two "bowls", one for each hand. This matches the fact that our fingers are not all the same length. The Kinesis 2 allows keys to be remapped in an arbitrary manner; it also moves common keys like ENTER to the thumb. This takes some getting used to, but I've gotten to the point where I can go back and forth between it and one of the split keyboards without too much QLF. I've recently operated several contests with this keyboard. Once I adapted to the unusual placement of the arrow keys and the fact that the Function keys are smaller than usual, it went smoothly. As I own only one of these, and it is rather large, I have used it only for SO1R or single-keyboard SO2R.

As a long-time user of the venerable EMACS text editor, I make heavy use of the control keys. I've found that remapping CAPS LOCK to be CONTROL eases stress and prevents tendonitis. Googling "remap control to caps lock" will bring up directions for doing this for Windows, Mac and Linux. A more radical remapping is possible with the Kinesis 2, as it has multiple keys accessible via the thumbs.

Mouse

Normal mice require the hand to be turned in an unnatural way. Enter the vertical mouse. These keep the hand in a more natural position and avoid yet another form of repetitive stress injury. The mouse should be easily reachable, as should the CW paddle. Be careful with wireless mice, however. They can be more jittery than wired mice and the battery can die. I always keep a wired mouse handy to swap in at a moment's notice.



Monitor(s)

The monitor(s) should be large enough to allow all information you need to see. But it's also essential to avoid squinting or leaning forward to see the important info. Many loggers allow the font of the entry window to be adjusted. Be sure to take advantage of such features to keep the text comfortably readable. Also (note to self), be sure to wear reading glasses that are appropriate in strength to what your eyes require. If you have an astigmatism, it can help to get special reading glasses that take that into account.

Foot Pedals

Foot-pedals for phone operation can be a cause back problems. If you are standing up, it forces you to stand on one foot, which can put stress on your back. While sitting, it similarly requires you to unweight your foot. If this causes pain, it is possible to use a hand-operated switch. I have actually taken the foot pedal and put it on my desk and controlled it with my elbow. The down-side to this arrangement is that it takes your hand off the keyboard. A good solution is the use of VOX, providing your dog's barking doesn't trip it (mine does.)

Radio Placement

Finally, there is the question of the placement of the radio itself. Much has been written about the importance of having it easily accessible. However, with limited desk space, this may not be possible and a remote tuning knob can be a good substitute. I have such a device for my Icom IC-7610, as well as a FlexControl knob for when I am operating the Flex 6600M remotely. Other radio functions (such as filter settings) can be mapped to graphic elements or hot keys in your logging program. Another option is a K3/0 or Maestro, both of which take up less desk space than most transceivers.

Similarly, auxiliary functions, such as antenna selection, rotator control, etc. can often be controlled by computer applications, making them readily accessible without using up extra desk space. The tradeoff is that changing application focus to access them may be an issue in the middle of a contest. To avoid this, it may be possible to map stack match controls to unused control key combinations. This is possible with Green Heron software, for example.

You Gotta Move

The most important lesson I've learned about ergonomics is that there is no ideal position for your body. Bodies are not made to be stationary for long periods of time. The best approach is to change position from time to time. If your station setup allows for this, you are more likely to be able to stay focused on the task at hand, and avoid being distracted by body pain. And, if the contest allows for off-times, take advantage of them to climb a hill or do some stretches. Even when you're on duty, when things get slow, you can often get in a few stretches while your CQ repeat is running. Yes, when someone calls you, you may have to leap up to stop the auto-CQ, but it's a small price to pay for being able to walk the next day.

Let's all stay healthy while operating, so we can keep up this great hobby for many years to come. And, as N0AX so aptly put it, after visiting state of the art contesting stations with broken-down chairs... "C'mon, get a friggin' chair!"

Ed Note: I recalled, several years ago, seeing an ergonomics-health article in NCJ. John, K3MD, of the Frankfort Radio Club, responded rapidly, graciously and productively to my request for his comments and the following is a guest article submitted by John. N6ZFO

Ergonomic Considerations for the Contest Station

by John W. Thompson MD(ret), K3MD

I have been asked to write a short article on ergonomic considerations for the amateur radio contester. Please remember that I am a retired diagnostic and interventional radiologist, not an orthopedic surgeon or rehabilitation specialist (physiatrist).

The primary considerations for station ergonomics are: lessen fatigue, allowing for more operating time, having all control and monitors in an easy-to-reach location, ease of use, not inducing lumbar spine disease or cervical spine stress, allowing for ease of bathroom use, and allowing for relaxing breaks and meals either alone or with significant others or other operators at the same multi-operator setting.

First, there is a current craze for having multiple monitors at each station. This is evidenced by many pictures submitted of operating positions with ergonomically designed desks and multiple monitors, seen on every contest club reflector. Multiple monitors may be necessary for RTTY operators who use multiple decoders (MTTY, 2 Tone, etc.). I personally use only one decoder, as I can focus on only one thing at a time. Remember, multitasking means doing two or more jobs less well than just one, as the human mind is designed to concentrate on one thing at a time. I can only read one book at a time, and can only look at one decoder at a time. You would certainly not want a radiologist doctor who does not concentrate 100 percent on your case and getting the correct answers from the images, or a surgeon who does not have 100 percent control of everything in the OR, including the personal atmosphere in the room. Swearing at an excessive EBL (estimated blood loss) is allowed. Shouting at the anesthesiologist keep the systolic blood pressure above 100 is allowed.

I have considered using multiple monitors for VHF contesting. However, since I only use ON4KST and the Packrat chat pages, the use of multiple monitors is not required at my station. On 6 meters, one only needs to operate some FT8, and, if the band opens, you just QSY to CW/SSB and call CQ or look for stations in that direction. This is, in my mind, not very complex. WSJT-X logs directly into N1MM+. What could be simpler?

I have attended a talk at Contest University that stated that the main monitor needed to be just above the rig. I promptly went home and put my monitor there, but moved it back in 24 hours, since it had been to the L of the rig for the past 20 years, and that was the only position I could tolerate. The speaker started his talk by stating that he had been recently having cricks in his neck...I almost fell off my chair laughing internally, but did not want to embarrass the speaker, who is a world-class contester. The monitor must be placed where it does not give you a crick in the neck.

As far as keyboard placement and SO2R, I am not qualified to answer this consideration, since I am a SO1R contester. I have difficulty chewing gum and walking at the same time. SO2R is for the super-contester, or those who have an absent corpus callosum. The corpus callosum is the part of the brain that tells the L hemisphere what the R is doing, and vice versa). There is a congenital malformation of the brain with absence of the corpus callosum. I do not have this malformation. Patients with this malformation have studied extensively in the medical literature for many years.

Obviously, all controls must be within easy reach, and easy to use. At my station, operating a VHF/UHF/microwave contest involves standing up to turn preamps on and off, etc. for switching between CW, SSB and FT8, and is exhausting. However, it is fun!

As far as the type of chair needed, that is open to debate. I use an old wide straight-backed chair, with no swivel legs, a lumbar pillow, and an egg-sitter. I do have an office chair for guest operators, if that is what they prefer. In

order to lessen fatigue, one must sit with the lumbar spine in the least-curved position, with the trunk vertical. This is the “military” sitting position. It has been developed over many years by the military, which does not want any disability due to improper sitting. This sitting position is, actually, less tiring over time.

It is of course essential that, in order to lessen lumbar strain, weight must be kept down, and daily or weekly exercises to strengthen the abdominal musculature, which helps in supporting the lumbar spine, be undertaken by the person who wishes to sit for a long period of time (necessary to win the contest). Perhaps the best exercise is abdominal crunchies. I do 80, two times a week. Sit ups are not recommended.

Being able to urinate or go the other way on the same floor is desirable, but climbing the steps to the bathroom helps exercise the legs, helping to prevent blood clots in the legs and resultant pulmonary embolism (often fatal).

The subject of eating and the single operator has been covered earlier in an article written by this author for NCJ. Obviously, it is difficult to talk and eat at the same time. I received many comments on my lovely XYL, Shirley, bringing food down for me to eat during CW contests. For the very spoiled contester, having the XYL or significant other bring meals to the shack is obviously the way to go. You will get crumbs in the keyboard, however. K3LR has a very nice lounge for operators in which to eat, complete with a Keuring coffee maker. The traditions for eating in WPA and EPA are in stark contrast. In WPA, it is considered rude not to supply meals for all operators. In EPA, the operators are largely expected to bring their own meals at some multi-multis, or to go out and buy them from a take-out. As usual, customs may vary from area to area.

As far as ergonomics, there are companies that design and build automobile and military radios. They employ specialists for the correct shape and size of knobs. Some love Elecraft ergonomics, some Icom, some Yaesu, some Kenwood. The IC-7600, 7300, 7000, Pro III, etc. interface was designed to be very easy to use. I prefer the FT-5000 interface, as it is very easy to vary the passband continually or to turn DNR on and off, and it is difficult to transmit accidentally on simplex when you mean to transmit on split. No two hams will agree on which ergonomic system is better or why it is better or worse.

Temperature should be near room temp. My old contest station in DuBois had wood heat, with electric baseboard to keep the electronics above 35 degrees F when not in use in order not to stress the electrolytics. The first few hours in the winter were cold. The wood heater was able to make it so hot in the building that many windows needed to be opened a crack in order to keep the inside temperature below 85 degrees F when the outside temperature was 10 degrees F. Also, you needed to put in more wood every 2 hours or so.



Overall layout of K3MD. Rig on right is backup rig and linear, in case the main rig stops working, and the main backup linear (out of sight on floor) also fails. Backup is essential in radiology, as equipment failure is common.



Ergonomic chair. Ugly, but works. No design beauty incorporated into this chair.



K3MD VHF/UHF/ 1296 stack. 6M linear is on other side of shack. All controls within easy reach.

The opinions expressed in this work are those of the author and may not agree with opinions held by other testers. 73, John, K3MD

I hereby certify that the entire December 2020 JUG was assembled while standing at the computer station in my kitchen.

Seasons greetings to all and best wishes for a happy (er) contesting year in 2021.

*73 Bill N6ZFO
JUG Editor*

The Last Non-Digital QSO

John W. Thompson MD K3MD

“CQ, CQ, CQ contest, this is K3 Mike Delta” (repeat 20 times)

“K3MD, this is Kilo X-ray Zero Alpha Charlie Charlie”

“KX0ACC, 59 Pennsylvania”

“59 Minnesota:

“Where is everybody?”

“They're all on FT8 and PSK31, the digital contest is this weekend.”

“But this is the main domestic SSB contest of the year”

KX0ACC, “Digital has overtaken any CW or voice contest, voice is so old and RF space-wasting, the FCC is considering banning it's use by any amateur.”

K3MD, “Really?”

“Yes, where have you been the past 10 years?... Even non-digital analog voice is passe, the FCC is considering phasing it out entirely, error-corrected digital voice is so much more narrow-band and energy efficient.”

K3MD, “But SSB is highly efficient, it eliminates the carried and unwanted sideband, it was the most major invention in radio in the past 80 years.”

“It is totally obsolete, like the regenerative receiver or the dated superheterodyne receiver or transmitter.”

K3MD, “How sad.”

“Yes, nowadays on one speaks to one another anymore, they just input their keyboards... not need for human to human interaction, just keyboard to keyboard.”

K3MD, “But what about social norms, body language, inflection of voice, polite conversation, rapid-fire contesting, and the like?”

“Totally obsolete, if keyboard-to-keyboard communication is not allowed, then there can be no competent contest bots running average or super-station.”

K3MD, “You mean at the beginning of the contest, you just turn your rig on and let it do all the work?”

“Yes, you dummy, haven't you read the newest publication on auto-contesting?”

K3MD, “No, auto-contesting?”

“Yes, now all you do is turn your rig on, and the computer does all the rest. This leaves more time for computer gaming and imaginary contacts via the internet.”

K3MD, “Imaginary contacts?”

“Yes, all you do is tune your internet radio to the imaginary band, and a ham-bot will have a nice imaginary contact with you, telling you its name, location, and imaginary radio and antenna system.”

K3MD, “You can't be serious.”

“Well, you have to get with the times..... amateur radio communication using skywave is really getting to be a thing of the past. There is a special JT175 class where you can operate 1 watt or less only, and the computer with the best digital analysis software always wins, as most signals are 40 dB or more below the noise floor.”

K3MD, “But what about my KW and 6 element 20 meter beam?”

“Sooo passe, it is an energy-waster, we only include the modes that are the most efficient at this time, with auto-error correction, of course.”

K3MD, “You mean my AL-1500 is no longer needed?”

“No, the maximum power limitation is now 500 watts, and that is thought to be excessive at this time due to the high population density of the world, and there is danger of excessive body heating by that much RF.”

K3MD, “But what about my homebrewed antenna farm?”

“Not allowed any more, everything must be approved through government inspection, RF exposure limits are stringent. RF exposure is allowed primarily for MRI only. Broadcast TV and radio are also limited to 500 watts, since the internet is so much more efficient.”

K3MD, “Ahhh, for the good old days!”

This is fiction. Any resemblance to persons living or deceased is coincidental.

Point Generator Profile

Jim, N6JS

Interviewed by Bob, W1RH

A few years ago, I walked into a NCCC meeting at the China Wok, in Vallejo. This was really a good place to meet, at least once a year, to give the guys in the North Bay and Sacramento area a chance to attend. I saw an available seat, across from Jim, K6JS and grabbed it. This was great, since I always like to talk wine making with Jim, along with radio stuff. Next to Jim was a guy I had yet to meet; Jim singer and another "JS" ; this time N6JS. It was definitely a Kodak moment, so I took a picture of the two "JS's" and it appeared in the following month's Jug.

I have since known N6JS as another serious Point Generator for the KB Club, as well as MLDXCC. While Jim can generate points in the CW mode, he absolutely excels in the phone mode. Check out these Sweepstakes Phone scores from Jim:

2020 – 220,946
2019 – 193,224
2018 – 202,014
2017 – 206,400

Now, for those of you who don't know SS, trust me when I say that these are huge scores!

You'll also find Jim in other contests, including CQP and WPX Phone, where he also has put up big numbers.

Now, let's hear from Jim:

Name, Calls: My name is Jim Singer, call sign N6JS. I was licensed in 1977 as WA6YVS, living in Dixon, CA. As a Novice, I was between two Extra Class amateurs. I was the new kid on the block, and got a lot of great advice from these two old pros. I was also N1CS and N6PL for a short time before obtaining my N6JS call.

The N6JS Station: In 1987, I moved to my present location in Fairfield, CA. — Home to the Jelly Belly factory and Budweiser beer -- may the two never meet! I am on top of a hill, about 300 feet above the city, with one third of an acre. I have a 72 foot tower with a 4 band Yagi and a 3-element Mono bander for 20 meters along with 40 and 80 meter caged antennas. My station consists of Yaesu 9000C and a home-brew amplifier. The amplifier was built by WD7S, a silent key.



N6JS—Four-band yagi on a 70-foot Tower in Fairfield, CA.



N6JS himself savoring a wall of plaques awarded for contesting and DX Accomplishments

Point Generator Profile, Jim N6JS, Con't.

Career: I retired from the Federal Govt and Air Force Reserve in 2008 with 35 years of service as a production supervisor in charge of the C-5 flightline. While serving at Travis AFB with the reserves, I had the opportunity to fly around the world on the C-5 Galaxy. Many times while flying, I got to pursue my Ham passion as an aeronautical mobile. Many, many hours and many, many great contacts from 35,000 feet. I am a lifetime member of NCCC, along with WPSS (Western Public Service System) and am a member of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club. I would consider myself a part-time DX hunter. Most DX I work comes to me, instead of me going to them, but I do enjoy contesting. My favorite contest is the California QSO Party.

On the Air: My first CA QSO was in 1993 with my contest partner N6UUG (Silent Key.) Bill owned a cabin in Tulumne County and we used to go up about 4 days before the contest and string up our antenna system in the trees. It was a great time, and I learned a lot.

The other contests I enjoy are November Sweepstakes, both CW and SSB, although I must say that I'm more of an SSB operator than I am a CW operator. My only tip to my fellow contesters is, number one, have fun. If you don't have fun, you're not going to enjoy it. After all, it's only a hobby.

Plans for the future: I am looking to possibly relocate to North Carolina, along with my present wife of 45 years. My son and his wife are currently expecting our first grandchild. Yes, we're very excited about that. That may help to explain the move to North Carolina. I plan on installing a dream station there, with a minimum of 2 towers.

As far as other hobbies go, I have been a gym rat for the past 47 years. Remember, no pain, no gain.

In closing, I feel it an honor to belong to such a great club as NCCC, and will look forward to participating in as many events that I can before moving.

REMEMBER, DX is not a matter of life and death, it's more important than that!

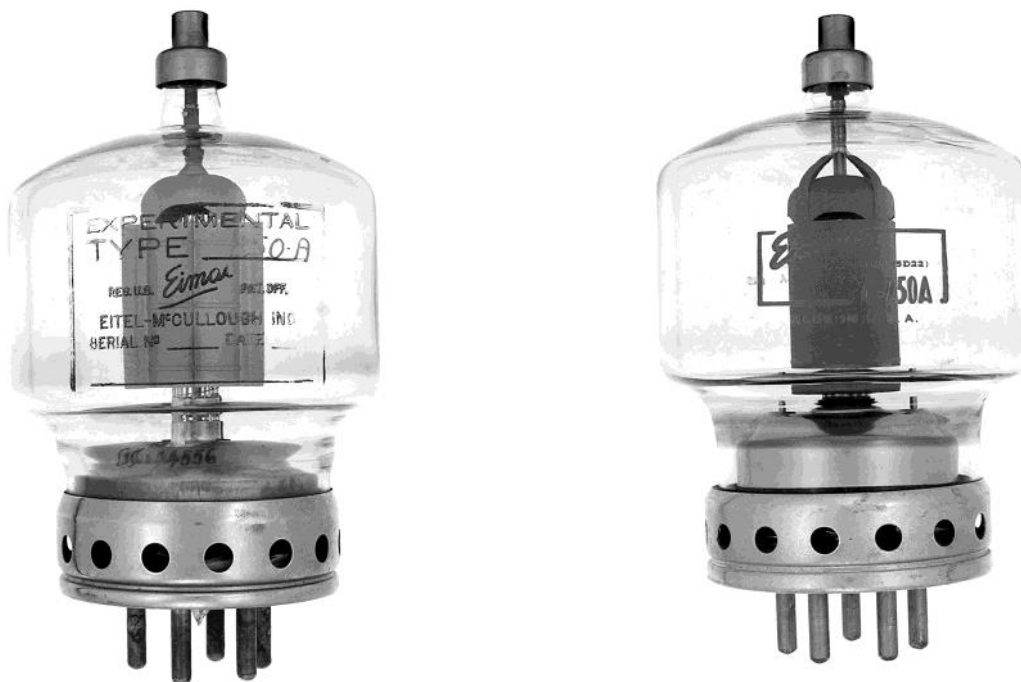
Tube Of The Month

The EIMAC 4-250A

Norm, N6JV

My first exposure to modern transmitting tubes was from the 1959 A.R.R.L. Handbook. I was studying for my ham ticket, so my father picked up a copy while in the big city of Fresno. I loved looking at all the advertising especially the tubes. The tube that I thought was particularly beautiful was the 4-250A tetrode featured in the EIMAC ad. It would be several years before I actually owned one of these tubes. EIMAC was developing tetrode tubes starting in 1944. The experimental 4-250A tubes were made from available parts. The plate was from a 250TH and the envelope was from a 304TL. Research took place for over a year and the new tube was ready as WWII ended. The 4-250A would operate up to 110 MHz at a kilowatt input although later tubes were rated at 1000 watts output. The new tubes were popular with the new FM broadcast stations.

I had picked up several 4-250A tubes when they were common at swap meets. I had been building amplifiers with the 4-400A tetrodes, but these were often expensive and the 250A would substitute with the same required power. Back in the 1970s, I would never miss the swap meet at Foothill College in Los Altos Hills, CA. There were lots of great tubes being offered. Once I found a seller with 4 chimneys that fit the 4-400A tubes. I always looked for these and he only wanted \$5 each for the 4 of them. He also had 4 of the 4-250A tubes on the table. He asked if I was interested in the tubes at \$15 each, but I told him that I had several tubes so I was only interested in the tubes if I could get them real cheap. He then asked me if I would take all the 250As he had at \$5 each. I should have been suspicious, but he called my bluff and I agreed to the sale. As I placed the tubes from the table into my box, he told me to wait. He crawled into his truck and emerged with a large box that was full of 4-250A tubes. It's good that I had a full tank of gas, because by the time I paid up for all those tubes, I didn't have enough money left to buy lunch. After over 40 years, I have never run out of 4-250A tubes from that deal and still use them.



Eimac 4-250A

Visit the museum at <http://n6jv.com>



NCCC Membership Information

If you wish to join NCCC, please fill out an [application for membership](#), which will be read and voted upon at our monthly meeting.

To join, you must reside within [club territory](#) which is defined as the maximum of:

- Northern California, anything north of the Tehachapi's up to the Oregon border, and
- A part of north-western Nevada (anything within our ARRL 175-mile radius circle centered at 10 miles North of Auburn on Highway 49).

Life Memberships.— \$250.00 Contact secretary.nccc@gmail.com. The 80/20 Rule: Members who have reached 80 years of age have and been a NCCC Member for 20 years are eligible for Honorary life membership. Contact secretary.nccc@gmail.com

JUG Articles Wanted!

Your help allows us to produce a quality newsletter. Please consider submitting an article!

The editor welcomes any and all relevant articles for inclusion in the JUG.

The preferred format is MS Word (.doc or .docx), Arial 11 point. Indicate the insertion point and title of diagrams and pictures in the text and attach photos separately. Pictures should be full resolution. Avoid PDF files and email text. Please contact us if that's your only format.

Send material to Bill, N6ZFO at n6zfo@arrl.net 415 209-3084

Northern California Contest Club Reflector—Guidelines

The NCCC reflector is devoted to the discussion of contesting.

Topics include, for example, contests, station building, dx-peditions, technical questions, contesting questions, amateur radio equipment wants/sales, score posting, amateur radio meetings/conventions, and membership achievements.

Postings may not include personal attacks, politics, or off-subject posts. Such postings will be considered a violation of the Guidelines.



Find NCCC on Social Media
Facebook: "Northern California Contest Club"
Twitter: "NCCCKB"



HAM RADIO OUTLET

MULTI-STORE BUYING POWER!

ICOM



IC-7610
All Mode Transceiver



IC-7200
HF Transceiver



IC-7100
All Mode Transceiver



ID-5100A Deluxe
VHF/UHF Dual Band Digital Transceiver



ID-51A Plus2
VHF/UHF D-STAR Portable

KENWOOD



TS-590SG
HF/50MHz Transceiver



TM-D710G
2M/440 Dualband



TM-V71A
2M/440 DualBand



TM-281A
2 Mtr Mobile



TH-D74A
2M/220/440 HT

YAESU
The radio



FT-991A
HF/VHF/UHF Transceiver



FTDX1200
100W HF + 6M Transceiver



FT-450D
A100W HF + 6M Transceiver



FTM-400XD
2M/440 Mobile



FT-60R
2M/440 5W HT



- RETAIL LOCATIONS - Store hours 10:00AM - 5:30PM - Closed Sunday
- PHONE - Toll-free phone hours 9:30AM - 5:30PM
- FAX - All store locations
- ONLINE - WWW.HAMRADIO.COM
- MAIL - All store locations

MRO is family owned and operated by active hams!

ANAHEIM, CA
(800) 664-6046

OAKLAND, CA
(877) 892-1745

PORTLAND, OR
(800) 745-4267

PHOENIX, AZ
(800) 558-7358

MILWAUKEE, WI
(800) 558-0411

WOODBIDGE, VA
(800) 444-4799

PLANO, TX
(877) 455-8750

SURBANK, CA
(877) 892-1746

SAN DIEGO, CA
(877) 520-9625

DENVER, CO
(800) 444-9476

ATLANTA, GA
(800) 444-7927

NEW CASTLE, DE
(800) 644-4476

SALEM, NH
(800) 444-0047

ONLINE STORE
WWW.HAMRADIO.COM