

dePresident, WM2C

## Ken's Pen

My favorite of all contests, the CQ WW CW is finally over. This is one contest where everyone in the world really participates, and the contest brings out a lot of DX. The abundance of DX in this contest can often lead one down the wrong path, DX chasing, assuming that the goal of your participation is to obtain the highest score. Why is DX chasing wrong in this contest? To obtain the highest score, you need a lot of multipliers. But a MULT is a MULT, regardless of how rare the country is!

Trying to bust the 3V8BB pileup for an hour is not a wise idea, especially if you don't need it for DXCC. There are lots of other MULTS that are a piece of cake to work if you look for them. A JA is worth the same points as the 3V, so why spend an hour in a pileup?

In case you didn't know, two Multi-Single teams from the NCCC went out in the CQ WW CW contest: HC8N, lead by WN4KKN; and 4M5X, lead by WM2C. Congratulations are due to HC8N for an outstanding victory, and a new M/S world record! Setting a world record at this time of the cycle is no easy task. While the two teams had similar MULTS, the HC8 gang had a commanding lead of QSOs. In fact, they should have set a M/S record for the number of M/S QSOs in the contest. I'll be meeting up with Trey in the next week or so to trade war stories, and I hope that we can turn this into a neat presentation for a future meeting.

While on MULTI-Single, I thought I'd take a moment and review the M/S category for both the CQ contests, and the ARRL contests. This category has been widely misunderstood for many years, and continues to be so.

**ARRL M/S:** The ARRL M/S is pretty straight forward, in that the intent is that a group of hams get together and have one transmitted signal. For example, you have one station, but no one wants to spend 48 hours at the radio, so you take turns. The rules do not prohibit you from having multiple receiving stations, so a competitive ARRL M/S will have at least one other station that is used for spotting MULTS and looking for band openings. And then you have the dreaded 10 minute rule. The 10 minute rule ONLY applies to the M/S category! The 10minute rule says you must stay on one band for at least 10 minutes before you can QSY to another band. Some people have assumed that since CT still shows you a 10 minute timer in the Single Op category, that even in S/O you have a 10 minute rule. Not So! The 10 minute rule only applies to the M/S category (for both ARRL and CQ WW)

**CQ WW M/S:** The CQ WW M/S is completely different from the ARRL version. In CQ WW, the M/S category sits somewhere

## Contest Calendar

deK2MM

### December 9-10

ARRL 10-Meter Test

### December 27

Internet SPRINT - CW

### December 30-31

ARRL Straight-Key Night  
RAC Canada Winter Contest

### January 6-7

No. Amer. QSO Party - CW  
Michigan QRP Club - CW  
QRP ARCI Sprint - SSB  
ARRL RTTY Roundup

### January 13-14

No. Amer. QSO Party - SSB  
JA Int'l DX - Low-Band CW  
Hungarian DX Test

### January 20-21

ARRL VHF Sweepstakes  
North Dakota QSO Party YL-ISSB QSO Party

### January 27-28

CQWW 160-Meter Test - CW  
UBA (Belgian) Contest  
REF (French) Contest

between the ARRLM/S version, and a full blown M/M. In CQ WW, you are allowed one running station - where this station can do anything it likes - but is usually there to run as many QSOs as possible. An additional transmitted signal (station) is allowed, if and only if this station works new mults. You can work as many mults on one band as possible during this 10 minute period. So you now have 2 stations on the air, one running, and one working new mults only. Both stations have 10 minute rules, but the timers are not tied to each other, such that the mult station will often QSY every 10 minutes, where the run station will often sit on one frequency for hours. A truly competitive M/S station will have 3 stations set up, one for running, one for mults, and one for spotting mults on another band, and looking for band openings.

Confused!? If you have questions on how to compete in these categories, just drop me a note, and I'll be glad to help you out. Many people have questioned why there are two sets of M/S rules... well the contests are different, and that should be enough. I like the fact that each contest has different rules. 73, Ken WM2C

# This Month's Scores

CQP	County	Catg	Mult	Score	QSO	CW
W6EEN	RIV	MS H	+58	284,606	2181	545
KG6LF	-	SO H	+58	141,752	1222	0
AC6DQ	AMA	SO H	57	88,350	775	0
N6TNX	CALA	MS H	+58	71,920	620	0
WW6D	SON	SO L	46	28,750	233	159

CQWW Phone	QSOs	Mults	Total
W6EEN	2253	488	3,076,352 M/S
W6REC	1479	322	1,354,654 S/O
W6QHS	592	400	648,400 18h
N6CCL	525	326	473,026 S/P
K6HNZ	1012	135	350,325 20m
W6BIP	178	-	78,432 S/O
AJ6V	167	144	64,656 S/P
W6OAT	78	97	19,788 S/P
W6ISQ	43	25	3,075 S/P
K6MA	13	12	560

CQWW CW	QSOs	Mults	Total
K3EST @N6RO+W6RGG	2534	528	3,726,624 M/M
AG6D +N4TQO+K2MM+NF6S	1701	485	2,288,715 M/S
WZ6Z	919	455	1,165,710 S/P
W6REC	789	372	815,052 S/P
W6OAT	327	304	269,952 S/P
AB6YL	364	158	153,576 S/O
WA8LLY	90	132	31,548 L/P
K6MA	55	62	8,432

JA International DX	QSOs	Mults	Total
N2ALE	13	13	169

SS CW	Score	QSOs	Sec	Pwr	Hrs	Cat
KI3V/7	218,218	1417	+77	B	-	S/O
N6TV	209,608	1379	76	B	-	S/O
W6QHS	198,968	1292	+77	B	-	S/O
N6RO	196,536	1293	76	B	24	S/O
WC6H	190,912	1256	76	B	-	S/O
AA6KX	182,798	1187	+77	B	24	S/O
NI6T	155,386	1009	+77	B	-	S/O

NI6T	155,386	1009	+77	B	-	S/O
K2MM	154,308	1002	+77	B	19	S/O
AB6WM	138,320	910	76	B	18	S/O
WA6CTA	130,568	859	76	B	20	S/O
W6RGG	130,130	845	+77	B	19	S/O
KA6W	129,504	852	76	-	-	-
KM6OH (+W6BSY)	121,814	793	+77	-	-	M/S
AE6Y	116,584	767	76	A	16	S/O
W6ISQ	114,576	744	+77	-	-	-
W6OAT	110,264	716	+77	B	18	S/P
AE0M	101,332	658	+77	B	-	S/O
AA6MC	100,716	654	+77	A	-	S/P
WA6TKV	100,716	654	+77	B	24	S/P
AB6YL	82,782	567	73	B	23	S/O
W6BIP	78,110	535	73	B	16	S/O
K6LRN	62,012	419	74	B	15	S/O
N6DA	45,360	324	70	A	13	-
K6BPB	43,920	305	72	A	21	S/O
AD6E	41,756	286	71	-	-	-
N6IP	39,520	304	65	-	7	-
W6PLJ	38,482	271	71	A	19	-
N1EE/6	36,036	273	66	A	7	S/O
AB6EQ	35,500	250	71	-	-	S/P
W6GPM	33,600	240	70	B	22	-
KD6NOS	32,096	236	68	-	-	S/P
WW6D	28,426	233	61	A	9	S/O
NF6S	23,058	183	63	-	-	-
K6PU	22,554	179	63	B	10	-
W6REC	22,000	200	55	Q	6	S/O
AA6TY	19,470	165	59	A	20	S/O
KG6I	15,544	135	58	-	6	-

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## NCCC TREASURER'S REPORT

NO TREASURERS REPORT THIS MONTH



Seasons Wishes  
and  
Happy New Year

Larry NF6S

### The Northern California Contest Club

President: Ken Silverman, WM2C  
86 Grandview Place, Walnut Creek, CA 94595  
510 210 0410(h) 510 279 6411(w)  
Internet: ken.silverman@airtouch.com

VP/Contest Chr: John Zapisek, K2MM  
Sec/Treas: George Daughters, AB6YL  
Directors: Bruce Sawyer, AA6KX  
Dick Dievendorff, AA6MC  
BoB Wolbert, N6IP  
Jim Hollenback, WA6SDM

JUG Editor: Larry Word NF6S  
2184 Bluebell Drive, Livermore, CA 94550  
510 449 9195(h) 408 434 1841 Ext 308(w)  
Internet: word@crl.com or cword@isissm.com  
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Scores Fm Peg 2

NG0X	10,454	218	48	A	-	S/O
N6EE	3,444	42	41	-	-	S/P
N6TNW	680	20	17	A	6	S/O
N7STU	96	8	6	Q	-	-
CW Total	3,530,412					
<b>SS Phone</b>						
	Score	QSOs	Sec	Pwr	Hrs	Cat
KI3V/7	329,942	2133	+77	B	23	S/O
WC6H	300,608	1952	+77	B	-	S/O
KD6UO	260,568	1692	+77	-	-	-
AA6MC	188,958	1227	+77	B	-	S/O
W6BSY (+KM6OH)	184,954	1201	+77	-	-	M/S
NI8T	174,020	1130	+77	B	24	S/O
KJ6DL	170,170	1105	+77	B	22	S/O
N6RO	169,708	1102	+77	B	12	S/O
AB6WM	167,860	1090	+77	B	-	S/O
AI6V/KH6	153,540	1023	75	A	24	S/O
WA8TKV (+KD6KKP)	147,224	956	+77	B	24	M/S
AB6EQ (+KD6NOS)	119,350	775	+77	B	-	M/S
N6ZB	111,000	740	75	-	-	-
W6OAT	110,264	716	+77	-	-	S/P
AC6DQ	103,180	670	+77	B	18	S/O
N6TNW (+N6TNX)	102,102	663	+77	B	19	M/S
W6ISQ	101,024	656	+77	-	-	-
N6TV	100,200	668	75	B	7	S/O
W6QHS	83,006	538	+77	-	7	S/O
AB6YL	81,900	546	75	B	19	S/O
W6BIP	79,496	523	76	B	-	S/P
W6RGG	77,000	500	+77	A	16	S/O
AE0M (+N0BBS)	75,088	494	76	-	19	M/S
AE6Y	71,148	463	+77	A	10	S/O
AD6E	59,906	389	+77	-	-	-
K6LRN	52,500	350	75	B	14	S/O
N6UUG	50,410	355	71	B	11	S/O
W6GPM	43,920	305	72	-	17	S/O
WA8LLY		42,966	279	+77	A	11 S/O
AC6NS	41,292	279	74	A	-	S/O
W6ISO	39,760	284	70	A	20	S/O
N1EE/B	37,940	271	70	B	11	S/O
AA6TY	35,840	256	70	A	20	S/O
NP4IW/B		35,112	266	66	A	8 S/O
KG6I	33,872	232	73	B	9	S/O
NF6S	27,202	203	67	-	-	-
K6BPB	25,844	182	71	B	21	S/O
KN6QT	25,840	190	68	A	21	S/O
KC6ESL	23,800	175	68	A	9	S/O
N6EE	18,500	125	74	-	-	S/P
W6DPD	15,860	130	61	A	7	S/O
WA6CTA	14,040	130	54	-	2	-
N6GRJ	11,660	110	53	A	6	S/O
N6IP	10,488	114	46	-	4	-
KD6ZMJ	4,514	61	37	A	10	S/O
K2MM	3,680	61	30	A	3	S/O
N2ALE	3,648	57	32	A	6	S/O
WW6D	510	17	15	A	1	S/O
N6DA	476	17	14	-	-	-

Phone Total 4,123,152

SS Grand Total 7,653,564

**INSIDE TIP:** I have it on good sources that Kenwood will be offering a beverage switch kit for the TS870. Might be worth looking into. Larry N6ES Ed

**FOR SALE:**

**ICOM 761** - 100 watt xcvr, includes passband tuning, built-in antenna tuner and electronic keyer. Includes optional 250 Hz filters (9MHz and 455 KHz) and computer interface - \$1200. Original box and owner's manual. Recently aligned. Service manual for IC-761 \$15.

**ICOM SP-20** with hi and low pass audio filter, matches IC 761, 765, 781, or 775 - \$100.

**Timewave DSP 59+** audio filter upgraded to version 3.0 ROM - \$200

Contact: Dick Dievendorff, AA6MC, (408) 978-9234 or via packet.

**AB6YL Chuckle**

Here is a little anecdote which I've told before, but a couple of members asked me to write it up for the JUG. I guess they found it humorous for some reason.

Our friend Jay Allen, VY1JA, expressed his frustration with pileups, and had asked advice on how to control what is basically an uncontrollable phenomenon. A few days later, during the 1994 Phone Sweepstakes, when I worked him he asked "If you hear Idaho or Puerto Rico, come back and tell me where they are. I need them for a sweep."

Darned if I didn't spot both sections within the next few minutes, so I went back and told Jay they were both down a few kHz from his frequency.

He said "Hold my frequency; I'll be back in a couple of minutes." So I continued to call CQ and work lots of stations, many of whom were surprised to be getting a SCV section instead of Yukon. For some reason, the size of the pileup dwindled, and I found it not at all difficult to manage. (What's the problem, Jay?)

Jay came back in a few minutes... he'd caught ID but not PR, as I recall... and his frequency was nicely cleared. Not a sign of a pileup remained, but somehow he had a new one growing as I moved on. 73, ab6yl

**NCCC Holiday Banquet / NEXT MEETING**

The annual NCCC Holiday Banquet is just around the corner! The NCCC holiday party is always stylish, always loads of fun, and definitely the place to be! Join us for the fun, festivities and jolly good times on Sunday 17 December 1995, at the Pleasanton Hotel, Main Street, Pleasanton. Bar opens at 6PM, Dinner at 7PM. Spirits served at the cash bar.

**MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW.** Payment must be made in advance, and no reservations will be made without an accompanying check! Please mail your check by 3 December 195 to George Daughters, AB6YL, 1560 Klamath Drive, Sunnyvale, Ca 94087

**MENU**

\_\_\_Charbroiled Breast of Chicken, w/Mushroom marsala sauce, served w/seasonal vegie and rice pilaf.

\_\_\_Herb and Peper roast prime rib of beef aujus, w/roasted red potatoes and fresh vegetable.

\$32.00 per person includes your choice of entree above, a salad of mixed california greens w/balsamic vinaigrette, roots, coffee or tea. This is a feast not to be missed!

Contact George, AB6YL at 408 732-2676(H) for more information.

# A Visit to ARRL Headquarters

There is a tremendous amount of work being done by volunteers, and in fact most of "the ARRL" is folks like you and me, not the permanent ARRL staff. A good part of the technical material and articles come primarily from members rather than permanent staffers.

Nope. One more time, then I give up.

I've read QST since I was about ten years old. Over the years I've seen pictures of the place, read articles about the place, but I'd never been there or actually talked to anyone from "the ARRL".

I had some troubles a few months ago with some neighbors who weren't happy with my tower. The support I got from the ARRL, including my Division Director, Section Manager, and the ARRL HQ staff really impressed me. The help was personal, timely, and thorough. People seemed to care. I received a great deal of material that was of help when I presented my position to the City Planner.

Business took me to the East for a few days, so I arranged to visit ARRL HQ. I wanted to meet some of the folks that I'd been corresponding with.

A couple of hours of driving from New York City brought me into Newington, a good-sized suburb of Hartford. ARRL HQ is on the main street, which appears to be primarily residential.

The building I remember seeing in all the pictures, the Hiram Percy Maxim memorial station, is the house on the street. Headquarters itself is a two-story office building in the "back yard".

John Hennessee came out to introduce himself. John works in the Regulatory Branch, and is the staff expert on interpreting FCC regulations. John had helped with materials for my presentation to the City Planner, including a study of communications effectiveness as a function of antenna height that makes the technical case that a 35 foot tower is inadequate for amateur communications.

Ed Hare, Technical lab director, gave me the tour. He showed me the famed Wouff Hong (pronounced "woof hong"). It was smaller than I had thought it would be, perhaps 12" in total length. We paused for a minute to imagine how it might be used on a "rotten" operator.

I visited the Contest and DXCC desks, which both share a largish room, which I think was most of Membership Services. The Contest Desk is just two desks, occupied by KR1R and NF1J. The DXCC desk was maybe two more desks.

Ed took me into the Technical Library where I would have really enjoyed spending a couple of days. It has every radio book you could imagine, plus back issues of QST to the 30's. Earlier issues are kept locked up. Ed looked me up in a 1959 callbook and gave me a photocopy of the page with my first callbook appearance.

We went into a screened room where I saw a Kenwood TS-870

on the bench for evaluation. Ed has each of the new rigs (FT-1000MP, IC-775 and TS-870) and a review article is in the works for each rig. Ed is very aware that a lot of us want QST quality reviews of the current crop of equipment as quickly as possible.

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I had lunch with Ed Hare, John Hennessee, Billy Lunt, and Warren Stankiewicz. We swapped stories and laughed a lot.

After lunch I operated W1AW briefly. It's open to licensed hams between 1 and 4. Bring a photocopy of your license. There are several complete stations, each containing current-generation equipment donated by a major manufacturer. I used a Kenwood TS-950.

Jim Cain, K1TN (QST Senior Editor) and I had dinner after work and laughed a lot more. Jim's station is tremendous. It's 1960's era Novice gear with wire antennas in the trees. He calls it his "super station". The transmitter is a Drake 2NT.

The general impression I got after visiting and talking with some of the ARRL staffers is that HQ isn't a big place. A lot happens with relatively few permanent staff.

Policy comes from the elected Board of Directors, and the management team serves at the pleasure of the Board. The Board is sometimes divided on certain issues, which makes the life of the ARRL staff very "interesting". Imagine having a dozen bosses who disagree with one another!

There is a tremendous amount of work being done by volunteers, and in fact most of "the ARRL" is folks like you and me, not the permanent ARRL staff. A good part of the technical material and articles come primarily from members rather than permanent staffers.

All of the people I met were my age or younger. This isn't a place full of ancient old men.

Contesters are well represented in the senior staff.

I liked these guys, and the visit was even more fun than I hoped it might be. I found the staffers dedicated to membership service. They work hard, I could see it everywhere.

If you ever have a chance to visit ARRL HQ, do yourself a favor and make the effort to get there. I'm going again before too long.

Dick Dievendorf, AA6MC

# JOHN'S JOTTINGS

## SCORES GALORE

Wow, what a difference a month makes! Last month's JUG had only 14 scores -- CQWW/ph results had just started trickling in -- and this month we have 115! But November has always been like that, right?

## SWEEPSTAKES RESULTS

The preliminary estimate of our club SS total is about 7.6 Meg -- 3.5Mon CW and 4.1M on phone.

Have you noticed how, when new members are introduced at club meetings, new CW ops get cheered while phone ops get booed? Well, it looks like the phone ops have spanked the CW ops this year! Congratulations and thanks to all you Fast Talkers . . . just keep on chewin'!

## DIFFERENT TONE FROM LAST YEAR?

One impression I got from last year's SS/CW was that there was an awful lot of rude operating. Plenty of frequency fighting, QRM'ing, etc. I came away from it shaking my head. Postings on the Internet suggested I wasn't the only one.

This year, though, the CW crowd seemed much better behaved. I don't know why this might have been, but I sure am glad for it. Anyone else have a similar (or different) impression?

## CQWW CLUB ENTRY

NCCC will also be making an entry in the CQ WorldWide club competition again this year. If you played in WW, please send me your score. More importantly, remember to mark your summary sheet for the NCCC. If you were part of a multi-op, don't forget to claim your share of the points!

Congratulations to Trey/WN4KKN, chief instigator of the HC8N DXpedition. HC8N set a new CQWW/CW M/S record with 14.7M and almost 7500 Qs! They beat the next-closest entry -- 4M5X featuring Ken/WM2C -- by better than 25 percent. Outstanding!

The CW running saw some superb conditions, even for the bottom of the sunspot cycle. At AG6D we were able to run EU on 40m both Friday and Saturday nights. 20 meters was very alive at midnight, and long-path openings were commonplace. Working ZD8Z on 80m was easy, and EU was quite workable on 160m on Saturday. Hope y'all had a chance to join in the fun!

## INTERNET SPRINT WEDNESDAY DEC 27

The next running of the Internet Sprint will be on 12/27 Wednesday from 5pm to 7pm PST (12/28 0100-0300 GMT)

on 40 and 80 meters. You won't find it listed in the big magazines' contest calendars, but it's one of the most fun events around. Two hours, CW only and 150 watts -- a perfect chance play radio without bothering your household or the neighbors!

Look for the rules to be posted soon on the CQ-Contest e-mail reflector, or send me a note on packet, and I'll send you a copy of the rules.

## TEN-METER CONTEST DEC 9-10

The ARRL 10m contest has club competition this year for the first time. The test runs 48 hours from 12/8 Friday 4pm to 12/10 Sunday 4pm PST. You can operate up to 36 hours. Send RS(T) and state for your exchange.

Single-op categories are CW-only, phone-only, and mixed. Multi-op is limited to single-transmitter mixed mode. Stations may be worked once per mode, and QSOs are 2 points on phone, 4 on CW, and 8 points for CWQSOs with Novices or Techs signing /N or /T between 28.1 and 28.3 MHz. Multipliers are states, provinces and DXCC countries, and are counted separately on CW and phone.

Bruce/AA6KX said he thinks we have a good shot at winning this thing from here on the Left Coast, and he's encouraged us to be the very first winner in the 10m club competition. On the other hand, Bob/K3EST thinks we don't have a prayer. Who's right? Get on for yourself and see!

## TOP-BAND TEST

The ARRL 160m will be over by the time you read this. It has club competition, too. If you played in this contest, remember to mark your summary sheet NCCC, and drop me a note with your score.

## NORTH AMERICAN QSO PARTIES

The CW weekend is January 6-7 -- probably before you get your next issue of the JUG -- and phone is January 13-14. If you like low-power (150 W) domestic contests, these are for you. The write-ups are co-authored by our very own Steve Merchant, N4TQO. So get on, send in a log, and help give Steve something to write about!

## SEND ME YOUR SCORES

Send your line scores or summary sheets to me via telephone, packet-mail, e-mail, or even snail-mail. John Zapisek, K2MM, 10559 Sterling Bl, Cupertino CA 95014, 408-446-9377, k2mm@maspar.com.

# SOAP BOX

--CW--

[Bob/W6RGG] Needed DE, SD & VI for a sweep. Found KP2N with a HUGE pile-up on 15 when I got on this morning, and called a couple of times with good results. Then went to 20 and found W0SD calling CQ, and then tuned some more and found W3NX answering someone's CQ, and stole him and the QRG after he was done for the sweep! After that I lost interest. . . .

[Dick/AA6MC] Ran low power to avoid pissing off neighbors too many weekends in a row. I think I prefer high power. I didn't make very effective use of the 2nd rig; I'm thinking of going back to one rig.

[Don/N6DA] Hey, it was suicide. 100 watts and dipoles for 20 & 40 up only 12 or so feet. Had to take tower down to put on new roof. Interesting, however, to see how "the other half" lives.

[Garry/N16T] This was my third sweep and first time over 1000 QSOs; I did not expect either. . . . Found the KP2 pile at 21073. After 15 min of useless calling, I realized that in no way was I going to break that pile, and my rate was in the toilet. So I did something smart: I went back to CQing. I decided to return to the KP2 pile on the half-hour, hoping he would still be there. When I did that, at first I heard nothing and thought, "Idiot! He's QRT!" And then I heard him CQing, with almost NOONE calling him! The pile had disappeared, but he was still there! One call and I had my sweep!

[George/AB6YL] One of my high points was getting into a trance-like mode while running, where sounds in the headphones become keystrokes with no conscious effort, but only conscious "monitoring" of the process, with interventions when necessary. I think I got just a taste of what \*real\* contesters must be doing!

[Kok/AA6TY] First time I submitted a SS entry, even though I have gotten on in the past to make a few contacts. This is truly a peanut whistle entry. The rig is 100 watts into a 12 foot vertical on my 3rd floor Sunnyvale apartment balcony.

--Phone--

[Peter/AB6WM/VE3SUN] On Sunday afternoon, with 76 down and 1 to go [San Francisco section], I tuned up and down the bands listening only to weak backscatter signals until I finally found AA6YX calling CQ with no takers. The first try, he gave up on me as unreadable after several minutes of callsign and exchange guessing. Sigh. But about 5 minutes later, I peaked his signal with the beam southeast, and managed to get through after several more repeats. . . . It did give me the opportunity to try CQing a while on 10 meters in hope of finding a SF Tech up there, so I got 8 Qs with locals in the 1 digit serial number range, and 3 east coast stations who were also foolish enough to be on 10.

[Steve/WA8LLY] Yes, SF does exist. I heard lots of guys asking what happened to SF. I was stuck with

an S&P effort. I'm suffering from repetitive stress problems with both hands and can't type fast enough (nor write at all) to try running. Even rotating the tuning knob was a pain. This was frustrating for me, but this was the first time I'd even tried to operate since July. Will consider a multiop effort next year.

[Walt/KK6NR] I heard and worked W6BIP in SF. He doesn't work 'em very fast, but he was there as in previous contests. The callsign database says he just turned 84 years old. Good for him!

[Ed/WA6CTA] Yes, SF DOES exist. However, I chose to make my effort in CW this year, and not SSB. AA6YX was on, but N6RA and W6BIP seemed to not be around. . . . When I got on Sunday morning to make a few Qs, I generated a 145 Q/hr rate. Guess I should have done the whole weekend! Oops!!

[Tony/AE0M] Only missing one section, South Carolina. Celia HEARD ONE S&P with 30 min to go. She nearly caught him three times, so now we know how Colonel Tarleton felt about the Swamp Fox. Celia did manage to improve her skills listening to -- and working -- stations only 1 kHz apart through AM broadcast. She is still hearing heterodynes right now...

[Rich/KI3V] 20 meters seemed to be the biggest problem. Just when you had a run going, here comes the nose pickers net that meets on your freq EVERY DAMN DAY and they WILL NOT MOVE!! They will jam you, call you names, and complain about the contesters and all the QRM. But do you think they will turn the rig off and go watch TV??? Nope... I think the ARRL should have ALL these useless nets move to the WARC bands!

[Tim/NU6S] [Commenting on US stations calling VE9AA below 3750] I guess they figured the FCC was one of those non-essential branches of the government that got a long weekend off.

[Al/AD6E] I finally finished massaging the logs. Actually this year that's no joke! Half way thru SS SSB I noticed the time displayed on the computer didn't match the GMT on the packet screen (different computer). It was off by an hour and 19 minutes. Then I discovered that the date in the log was Sept 14th. I checked with N6TV as to the time of our CW QSO two weeks ago. Sure enuf, it was also off by two months, an hour, and 19 min. I've always been one of those proponents of, "when it's over, it's over." Now I'm not so sure.

## **SWEEPSTAKES FROM THE YUKON** Bruce AAGKX

Over the past several years I have really come to depend upon Jay Allen, VY1JA, to come through in just about every North American contest and give me that badly-needed Yukon multiplier. Whether it was CQP, SS, the RAC contests, or whatever, Jay has always been there. Though I initially met Jay via contest contacts, we quickly came to recognize each other's call and soon were meeting for rag-chew sessions. Through those contacts I came to view Jay as a real pioneer out on the Yukon frontier. I learned that Jay worked hard at building up his station and enjoyed getting on the air during contests to pass out the rare YU multiplier. His style had always been to search up and down the bands, calling the people he could hear clearly. He never expected to win anything, but he simply enjoyed helping people out. Then Jay realized he could reach more people if he called CQ himself and let people come find him. That was when his problems began.

During the 1994 SS, Jay made a serious effort at calling CQ. In response, he was positively mobbed. The pile-ups were far larger than anything Jay was expecting and they simply went out of control. It's quite possible that fewer people scored the YU multiplier than if Jay had stuck with his old S&P method. After the SSB weekend, Jay was so frustrated by his experiences that he was talking of going off the air altogether. As the Internet post-mortem analysis rolled on, an idea suddenly struck me: wouldn't it be fun to go operate from the Yukon and possibly give Jay some help in the process? I contacted Jay and suggested that perhaps we should form a team and together put on a top-flight Yukon entry in the 1995 Sweepstakes. "Come on up!", he said, and a deal was struck. "Sideboard or CW?", I asked, then groaned when he answered "SSB". I vastly prefer CW to SSB. I had given Jay the choice, though, and now had to live with his decision.

When the spring snows first melted, Jay went to work getting ready for our November adventure. The severe weather last winter had left his station in a shambles, so he had a big task over the summer. A winter storm had folded his tower over and very nearly destroyed his 4 element quad. That was why none of us could find Jay during Field Day this last June. That tower was constructed out of scrounged pieces of three different towers Jay had located during his travels around the Yukon. He somehow found a way to bolt them all together, and the combination held his antenna up at 120' for several years before the storm took its toll. Over the summer, Jay salvaged what he could from the wreckage, repaired his quad, and had it all up and working at 80' by the time of CQP. Not all the tower sections were perfectly straight, but there are plenty of us around who can attest that it works.

Jay had earlier built his ham shack out of some scrap lumber and was careful to build it on skids, so that it could be moved. When the shack was finished, he put all his gear in it and set up a temporary antenna. Then he tied the shack to his truck and dragged it around his property to find the spot with the least noise from a nearby 40,000 volt power trunk. The shack ended up about 250 yards to the northwest of his home. It was there that he put his tower. But Jay decided all this just wasn't good enough for a visitor from NCCC. Thus he set out to remodel the shack over the summer by adding interior paneling, a new floor, and a new ceiling.

For me, the adventure began with the drive up there. I learned that the way to Whitehorse from my home in Saratoga would take me way east of the Rocky Mountains and then northwest up the Alaska Highway.

There is a more direct route, but I heard strong words of warning not to take it in winter. I initially thought I could make the drive in 3 days, but then I began hearing stories about the drive that made me nervous. Preparing for the worst, I packed enough survival gear in my truck to last a month stranded in subzero weather. Most importantly, I obtained a mobile antenna and completed a makeshift mobile installation in my pick-up truck. I left town immediately after a WRTC planning session the Sunday before the contest and didn't pull into Jay's place until the following Thursday afternoon.

The total journey was 2700 miles, half of it over ice-covered roads. But what a journey that was! The Alaska Highway passes through some of the most majestic scenery in North America, and in winter I had it nearly to myself. There were elk, caribou, bighorn sheep, and moose all along the highway. Those moose must be closely related to Georgia chickens, because they have the same reactions to passing traffic. They stand beside the road and look calm and content until you are nearly upon them. At that point they panic and decide the only safe thing to do is to dash across the road directly in front of you. The difference between a chicken and a moose, though, is that the moose usually wins the game if it turns into a contact sport. I came perilously close to losing several times.

The mobile HF station allowed me to break up the monotony of the long drive. This was the first time I had ever operated HF mobile and I'll readily admit I enjoyed it immensely. I did work a little DX and even passed out some contest QSOs to the JAs that first Sunday, but mostly I just passed the time chatting with friends back in the states. W6CYX and I were able to keep a regular schedule on my way up and back and I talked with numerous other NCCers along the way. That \$20 Hamstick I got at HRO really worked well! If you ever have to take a long drive, I highly recommend becoming mobile-ready before you leave.

The trip through the Yukon was just an unforgettable experience. This is an area more than 20% larger than California yet with a population of only 30,000 people. When you consider that 21,000 of those people live in the city of Whitehorse you can begin to understand what real wilderness is. It's mostly mountainous terrain with hundreds of miles separating adjacent cities (defined as a gas station with an attached general store). The land is mostly forested, and the timber wolf and grizzly bear populations are thriving. All but the major highways are closed in summer, since those roads depend upon ice bridges to cross the many wild rivers of the Yukon. The people I met were all rugged individualists who just can't conceive how we tolerate our well-regulated lives down here in California. I frankly think they're on to something.

When I got to Jay's, I found him out in his shack working furiously. The remodeling job he had started in my honor had fallen seriously behind schedule. The place was a construction disaster zone with no radio equipment in sight. After enduring my watching him work for a few minutes, Jay pointed to a pile of scrap lumber out in the yard and suggested I could help by building us an operating table. I did, and by late that night all our gear was set up on the new operating table. The newly remodeled shack was neat and orderly, everything almost ready for action. We made the trek to his house for dinner.

After dinner, one of Jays sons headed outside to do some stargazing. But he quickly returned and announced the dreaded news: "Dad, we've got an aurora outside!" We went out to look and sure enough--it looked as though the lights of Los Angeles

were just over the northern horizon. Jay then explained what that would do to radio propagation. Stage 1, he said, was that we could not get our signal out to the south. We would be able to hear clearly but nobody would be able to hear us. If the aurora progressed, we would then lose east/west propagation and eventually people to the south would lose propagation as well. On the contrary, according to Jay, if the aurora didn't progress beyond this stage then we could expect to see unusually good conditions on the high bands tomorrow. I took this all with a grain of salt, since it didn't fit with anything I had ever experienced. When I went out to the shack to bed down for the night, I noticed that 40 and 80 meter signals were just booming in from the south. The only problem was that they acted like I wasn't even there when I called them.

Friday, we went to work on antennas. Jay had been using his tower as a vertical for 40, 80, and 160. He had 19 elevated radials around it and was certain this was the best solution short of a beam. I convinced him to experiment, though, and we proceeded to put a 200' inverted "V" fed with ladder line up at the 70' mark, just below the thrust bearing. Jay said he had always wanted to put one of these up, but he had no way of obtaining ladder line. (Fortunately, I just happened to have a 100' length of it in my truck. I went up there with everything but the generator.) The antenna played beautifully on 40, even in the middle of the day. It took me no time to raise a pile-up of European stations at 2 in the afternoon. A few A/B tests between the "V" and the tower showed that it was distinctly better at both receiving and transmitting than what he had been using. I then went to put out a beverage, but Jay was skeptical. Several friends down south had convinced me this would be the way to copy weak signals through the auroral noise. "Your problem is not going to be hearing, it's going to be getting your own signal out", Jay argued. I put the beverage out anyway. The collective wisdom of the Northern California Contest Club just couldn't be wrong, could it?

Propagation Friday night and Saturday morning was simply dazzling. I operated both CW and SSB on 80 - 15 and easily attracted lots of attention. After somebody convinced me to switch from the VY1 to the CK9 prefix (allocated to the Yukon for 1995 only), I was besieged by prefix hunters. It was unnerving that I couldn't find any east coast stations on 15, but 20 was just jumping with them. I had really wanted to start the contest on 15 because of the likely crowded conditions on 20, but some tests just before the contest started indicated we would be better off on 20.

When the opening bell rang, it was a typical hectic contest start.

It took me a while to get my equilibrium with the large pile-up, but then we were off and running. In the first 4 hours I made 87, 121, 135, and 114 QSOs. These are not high numbers for any other contest, but with the long Sweepstakes exchange I was extremely pleased. I sat right on 14225 and just had a blast with the biggest pile-up I'd had since my ZF8BS adventures. I'll admit I thought a few times about calling "up 5" and having some fun with the SSTV guys, but I resisted that little temptation. The callers just kept on coming, every third or fourth person giving me an effusive "Thanks, Jay". Jay joined me late in the afternoon and watched it all intently. At 0047Z, we finally heard one lonely station answer our CQ, then nothing. At last, we had reached the bottom of the pile-up.

We dropped down to 40 and tried to stir up the same excitement. After a short spurt of west coast stations, the lights just went out--figuratively. I called CQ over and over and nobody answered. Then W6QHS came up and said, "I don't understand it. You're booming in here, but nobody is answering you." We didn't understand it either. I quickly tuned the band

and it was full of strong signals from all over. Finally I tried calling a few of the strongest signals. They just kept CQing. Then the light dawned on me. I got up, walked outside, and looked into the northern sky. There it was: a full-blown aurora. No need to check WWV to hear the K index--I could see it! Our only option was to struggle along and try to contact the strongest of the low-band stations. Jay and I passed the mic back and forth between us for the rest of the evening, alternating between CQing and answering other calls. We didn't knock off for the night until 0815Z, and for all our efforts we were rewarded with only another 160 QSOs in the 7-1/2 hours since we had left 20 meters. What was so frustrating about it was that we could clearly hear lots of strong signals coming up from the lower 48; they just couldn't hear us. We even got to listen to KH6RS--one of the few multipliers we still needed--talk about how he needed only YU to complete his sweep. I must have called him for 20 minutes. For a long time the only other station answering his CQ was neighboring VE8EV over in the Northwest Territories. He didn't have any better luck than we did.

Twenty meters was already open when I started Sunday morning and propagation seemed back to normal. By this time we had worked enough of the people in the contest that the pile-up was much more manageable than on Saturday. We even started getting QRP stations and were talking non-contesters through the exchange. Jay and I took turns operating but were both plugged in with a "Y" cable. Jay was using a lot of the techniques he had watched me use the day before to maintain order in the pile-up and he was getting a good rate of about 80/hr. as a result. More than that, he was enjoying it and was not at all intimidated by the pile-up. We quickly reached the point that we only had one multiplier to go--the Pacific section. Then somebody told us where to find KH6RS up on 15. We got the pile-up on 20 to stand by for a minute, did a quick switch to 15 to complete the sweep, then came back to 20 and continued. I don't think I've ever seen a grown man so happy as Jay was when he finally got that sweep--his first ever. He said he's going to build a special shelf in his shack to hold the trophy coffee cup.

When 20 died late Sunday afternoon, 40 proved no better for us than it had on Saturday. The last two hours passed slowly and we gradually realized that the goal we had set of reaching 200K was going to be just out of our reach. When the contest finally ended, we had made 46 contacts on 80, 132 on 40, 1089 on 20, and 15 on 15. It truly had been a 20 meter contest. For the record books, that 1282 x 77 we landed is far and away the highest showing ever turned in for SS from YU/NWT. My study shows the previous record was set by a group of NL7s on an expedition who posted 930 x 76 in 1993. Certainly our results were no win of any kind, but that was never my goal in going up there. My intent was to make sure that for once YU/NWT was as easy to get as Ohio and also to give Jay some help so that he could handle the pile-ups on his own in future events. I don't know if we were quite as easy to get as Ohio, but we certainly ended up Sunday afternoon begging for contacts while we had good propagation. Several people have since sent me email telling me we were even easier than Ohio!

So was the trip worth it? Absolutely. I've had my sanity questioned numerous times in the last few months for coming up with the idea of driving the Alaska Highway in the winter just to operate SS. But I know I got to witness the splendor of the far north in peace and solitude, I had a chance to meet Jay Allen in person and share in his life for a few days, and together we had a wonderful time operating this contest as a team. There were a whole lot of clean sweeps this time around, and they weren't just in California. I know we played a big part in that. In my book, the trip was definitely worth it. Bruce AA6KX



Jay VY1JA



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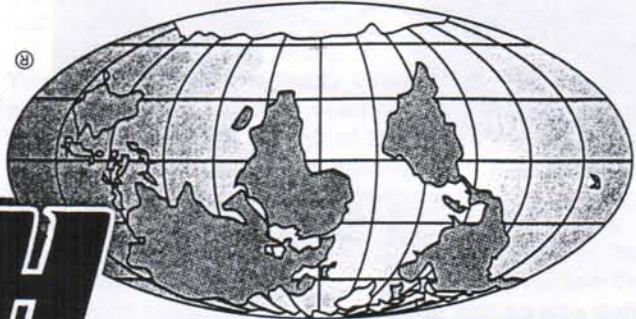
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