



MEETING:

DATE: Saturday, July 21, joint meeting with the MLDXCC at the Senior Services Center 229 New York Ranch Road Jackson, CA.
Program: W6KW presents his 80m "Death Ray" beam directions inside and our website:
<http://www.nccc.cc/meetings.html>

The NCCC 75 meter net meets on Thursdays at 9PM, 3830kHz approximately

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July Contests Dates

RAC Canada Day Contest	Jul 1
Venezuelan Ind. Day Contest, SSB	Jul 7-8

IARU HF World Championship **Jul 14-15**

CQ Worldwide VHF Contest	Jul 14-15
Colombian Ind. Day Contest	Jul 21
Pacific 160m Contest	Jul 21
North American QSO Party, RTTY	Jul 21-22
Georgia QSO Party	Jul 21-22
Venezuelan Ind. Day Contest, CW	Jul 28-29
Russian RTTY WW Contest	Jul 28-29
IOTA Contest	Jul 28-29

For a complete calendar, log submission details, and due dates for logs, visit:
<http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.htm>

XI-ting Times

What a club! This group continues to amaze me with its energy, enthusiasm and results. No, Field Day is not a contest, but NCCC was out in force at FD sites all over CA and NV. WPX scores continue to roll in and, even though 2001 WPX was not a major NCCC event, our members did incredible jobs, apparently winning or ranking highly in many categories. Support for our upcoming Big Club Efforts in 2001 SS and 2002 WPX is running very high. Accolades are coming in over CQP 2000 and it looks like participation will be high again in 2001. Al, AD6E, is preparing a mass mailing to prospective new members, and current members are coming out to meetings in increasing numbers. Do you think it's a sunspots thing or can we keep this going right on down the backside of the cycle?! I have been a member for 2.1 sunspot cycles now and the club is stronger than ever. Many of the same ops are still in there keeping the rate up, but there is new blood and new leadership in the club, too. There's a magic formula in here – veterans instilling club tradition in new members, experts teaching contesting technique to beginners, transplants adopting Northern California as their contesting home, travelers carrying the torch to foreign shores. Keep it up, gang, it just gets better!

One of the banes of radio amateurs everywhere is man-made noise. After several years of peace and quiet (except for 80m, but that's another story), N6XI got hit badly this month. I had just returned home from an across-the-country trip in my Cessna that included my son's college graduation (KC6YEW, inactive Tech+) and caused me to miss the great June meeting. I picked up my new FT-1000MP "Mark Nothing" at HRO, pulled out the venerable TS-930S destined for Truckee, filled up the Yaesu filter slots with loaners from K6XX, made an emergency call to N6TV to clarify the obscure documentation on how to rescue the amplifier key line from the MP and shoved the new rig into place in eager anticipation of that magic moment, first signals from a new rig. But no, the radio gods were not smiling that day. Murphy reigned supreme. Line noise! A loud, angry buzzsaw permeated the ether in Saratoga that day, S-9 from 160 through 10. The MP's noise blankers and EDSP got a workout as I frantically searched for signals loud enough to break through the blare. I learned to appreciate the noise reduction tools, but my frustration

grew as the noise persisted for hours, days, then weeks. I confirmed with other radios that it was real. (The Elecraft K-2 has a better NB, by the way.) Turning the beam suggested that it came from the NE, the direction of numerous domestic service transformers along a backyard line of power poles but also the general direction of a major high voltage transmission line along the railroad tracks through town. Then, out of season and with no warning, a miracle happened – it rained in June! The noise stopped. For an exhilarating 12 hours I could hear actual band noise. Summer storm static never sounded so good! I worked a dozen Euros, broke a pileup or two and life was good. I hoped against hope that the rain had actually washed away something conductive and solved my problem, but I knew better. As the driveways turned white again (no sidewalks in Saratoga) and the power poles dried out, the line noise returned. So far only up to S-7 on 15 and S-5 on 10, it is still S-9 below 15 MHz. I'm down but not out. I've found the name of a once-golden contact at PG&E and I've looked around for a portable RX that may help me sniff out the source. It started suddenly, so it is likely a single-point problem. Now I need some weekend time-in-town to locate the problem. Wish me luck, gang; I don't want to have to move! To be continued...

As you can see, personal problems have distracted me from my mission of serving the greatest contest club in the world. But there was method to my original madness. The new rig for N6XI was to be my contribution to the NCCC hardware arsenal. What have you done for your station lately? Have you raised a new antenna, improved your computer logging facilities, added an amplifier, set up for SO2R, fixed a flaky keyer, rearranged your boxes to create a more ergonomic layout, converted to 240V (well, maybe 234?!), replaced worn out feedlines, repaired an ailing rotator, pumped mojo into all electronic orifices? Now is the time, folks. Your station has served you well, but it wants to do more. It can do more. Figure out what repair is most needed and do it now. Figure out what addition will generate the most bang for the buck and get it now. We are in the quiet period between WPX and CQP (albeit with IARU coming up, a great practice contest if nothing else, and an opportunity to work W1AW/6 and W6ROD.) Now is the time for all good hams to come to the aid of their stations!

73, Rick, N6XI

Two phrases to live by... (seen in a Santa Fe, NM historical museum.)

"Trust your neighbors."

"Brand your cattle."

QST de W1AW/6

For 24 hours, from 1200Z on July 14, to 1200Z (that's 8 AM Eastern Daylight time, 5 AM Pacific Daylight, etc.) July 15, 2001, the ARRL Headquarters station call sign will be activated from CALIFORNIA as W1AW/6 for the duration of the IARU HF World Championship Contest. Prominent contest operator teams in Northern California Contest Club territory will make this unique station call-sign available to the world, and attempt to top the IARU Headquarters competition category in this event. The current champion and record holder in this class is the German team, DA0HQ, who made nearly 20,000 QSOs in last year's running. We hope that active USA amateurs will contribute to the 2001 USA HQ team score by contacting W1AW/6 on all band modes, 160 through 10m, ssb and cw.

To make your experience of working W1AW/6 even more special, a certificate will be issued for North American stations that work W1AW/6 on 8 or band/modes, and 6 band/modes for stations outside North America. A special endorsement will be made for those stations that work W1AW/6 on all 12 band/modes. More details on the awards and the operation can be found at <http://www.nccc.cc/>. Included there are lots of hints on "how to work W1AW/6", including propagation information, best times on the low bands, etc.

Look for W1AW/6 near the following frequencies for USA/DX:

CW: 1818/1833; 3538/3508; 7038/7008; 14038;
21038; 28038

SSB: 1848; 3838/3798; 7238/7158; 14238/14158;
21338; 28338

The IARU contest will be a fun event for all amateurs, whether you are a contester, DXer, award hunter or casual operator who might want to contact this one-of-a-kind W1AW/6 operation. Contest rules are at:

<http://www.arrl.org/contests/announcements/rules-iaru.html>

or on page 111, April 2001 QST. QSL via ARRL.

How the NCCC can help W1AW/6

In last month's JUG, I wrote about the history leading up to the activation of W1AW/6. Here's more information on the operation, how you can participate, and help W1AW/6 win the HQ competition category in the IARU contest on July 14 & 15.

Web pages have been created to announce our operation and encourage testers and casual ops alike to get on and work W1AW/6. Please check out the site, so that you know what we've told the rest of the world! Go to www.nccc.cc and click on the W1AW/6 button on the top of the home page.

To help our team achieve the rather difficult task of beating the European competition in the HQ category, we need a **LOT** of help, particularly from California and other west coast hams. We need to work stations on as many bands and modes as possible, especially on the low bands. NCCC can really assist us here - if 100 club members catch W1AW/6 on ten band modes, that's another 1000 QSO's or about 7% of our target total.

Please spread the word of the W1AW/6 quest to your local radio clubs or anyone you think might be interested. Note that we have an award for those working us on a minimum of 6 band-modes. We hope NCCC members will qualify for the award with the endorsement for all 12 band-mode QSOs!

In the last few weeks, we've also organized the activation of W6ROD, IARU Region 2 Executive Committee station, and an exclusive multiplier in the IARU contest. We're still working on final assignments for this station. Not all NCCC members can participate as W1AW/6 or W6ROD. However, anyone who wants to come to one of the "beacon" stations" for relief or token operating, or to learn something from the experienced operators there, you are welcome at W6YX and N6RO.

Here are the almost-final stations assignments and operator teams for W1AW/6:

<u>Band</u>	<u>Station</u>	<u>Ops</u>
10 CW	K6KM	K6KM, N6TV, K2KW
10 SSB	W6NL	W6NL+
15 CW	K6IDX	W6OAT, K5RC, W6EU, WJ6O
15 SSB	N6RO	N6BV
20 CW	W6YX	W6LD, N7MH, N6DE, W7SW +
20 SSB	N6RO	K3EST
40 CW	K6KM	K6KM, N6TV, K2KW
40 SSB	AI6V	AI6V, K6XC, KI7WX
80 CW	K6IDX	W6OAT, K5RC, W6EU, WJ6O
80 SSB	W6RJ	W6RJ+
160	N6RO	N6RO, WA6O

73, Ken, N6RO

NOTES from the NCCC Meeting of 11 June 2001

We had a great turn out of 49 members and guests in a new meeting location at HP's Mayfield site in Mountain View. An impressive number of our big guns attended, including Rich, N6KT, all the way from Fresno! Several members had just returned from the HC8N operation and Ed, AJ6V, remarked, "There are more people here from the Galapagos than from Los Altos!" VP/CC Andy, AE6Y, presided over the meeting in N6XI's absence and began with 'round the room introductions. People gave updates on their latest activities, particularly WPX CW, and plans for Field Day.

Ed, W0YK, gave a Treasurer's report and presented the proposed 2001-2002 budget which was unanimously accepted by vote of the members present. AE6Y reported on the club's second place finish in the club competition for the 2000 ARRL Sweepstakes:

SMC: 211 logs (69K/log)

NCCC: 123 logs (115K/log)

PVRC: 146 logs (84K/log)

The SMC (Society of Midwest Contesters) mounted a very successful effort to get a large number of members on the air. The NCCC needed only 4 more logs at the rate of 115K points per log to take first place. So, it continues to be true that the key to winning the club competition in SS is participation.

Old Business started off with the presentation by AE6Y of the Past President's plaque to Bob, K6XX, for his contribution as President for 2000-2001. Ken, N6RO, gave an update on the upcoming W1AW/6 operation for IARU in mid-July. Big-gun stations and operators have been lined up for each band-mode in an attempt to win the Country Headquarters category of this contest. In addition, Rusty, W6OAT, has stepped forward to coordinate a parallel effort of "medium gun" stations and operators using the W6ROD call which will be giving out the rare 'R2' Region 2 multiplier during the contest. (Find out more about these operations on our website, <http://www.nccc.cc>, where there are links at the top of the home page.) Finally, Bob, K6XX, gave a report from the NCCC WRTC nominating committee on the 10 operators our club has nominated for the 2002 WRTC in Finland.

New Business included the election of two new members: Jig, AD6TF, from San Francisco, who operates 100% CW, is new to contesting and just recently operated WPX CW from N6IJ. John, KJ9U, lives just 3 blocks from the meeting location, is just

getting started in contesting and operates 90% phone. And, he is NOT from the SMC! A very warm welcome is extended to Jig and John, whom we look forward to working in future contests.

The main agenda item for this meeting was to discuss strategy for winning the club competition in the 2002 WPX. Since we just finished the 2001 WPX, the idea was to capture learning and make plans for next year. The WPX club competition has been won by the NCCC in the past. Respectable multi-million point scores can be achieved by normal stations from Northern California, but nowadays, contest-expeditions will be needed to win. AJ6V gave a history of NCCC's success as a club in international contests. We've won WPX 6 times in the past, including setting the club record of 34M in the mid-80's. Since that time, the record continues to escalate and it is broken nearly every year. Our OH friends raised the bar to 251M in 2000, so our work is cut out for us! The NCCC also won CQWW club competition in 1981 when Bob, W6RGG, was President and N6KT was VP/CC and then again in 1983.

We had a spirited brainstorming discussion on strategies for maximizing our club score. In the Members section of our website, you'll find the notes which we intend to expand and re-work during the coming months. This will be our strategy and plans for winning the 2001 WPX club competition. We are hoping the Finns will be pre-occupied with WRTC 2002 and let us beat their record!

A few last minute items wrapped up the meeting. The building guards had locked the front door and gone home 2 hours earlier in the meeting! Fortunately, they left instructions for how to exit the facility. Also, we are still making an impassioned plea for a volunteer to step forward for JUG editor. George, K6GT, has served for 5+ years now and really deserves a break. Please contact any of the officers, or George himself, for information on this critical contribution to the club. Email addresses can be found on the front page of the JUG or in the Roster in the Members section of the website.

Andy, AE6Y
Ed, W0YK



Andy, AE6Y, holds forth at the NCCC June meeting.

Andy's Dandies

June Meeting

If you weren't there, you missed out on a really fun time shared by 50-plus (number, not average age) of our members. The spirit and enthusiasm were just terrific. Furthermore, there were more world, U.S.A., and Category winners from past WPX contests than have probably ever sat together in one room, including such stalwarts as AI6V, K2KW, K6AW, N6KT, N6RO, N6TV, W6NL, W6OAT, W6RGG, and many others (please, no offense intended to anyone accidentally left off the list.) Some of these guys could probably win WPX practically by themselves, but we were all there to talk strategy and brainstorm ideas about how to have the good ole NCCC come out on top in the 2002 WPX contest.

I'm hoping this sets a precedent for future meetings. Meetings are fun, so plan to attend, and bring your friends and neighbors. (*That sentence is a natural born pome! "Meetings are fun, so plan to attend, and bring your neighbor, and bring a friend... Burma-Shave...ed).* Here's a pome about meetings and you (and you and you...):

Meetin' Time

Club meetings are not just for beer,
There are programs, yarns, and good cheer.
So put down that mouse
Get out of the house.

It's more fun whenever you're there.

WPX Effort

Ed, AJ6V, gave a fascinating presentation on the history of NCCC efforts in major international contests. A super effort led by WA6VEF and N6KT (in a year when W6RGG was club president)

culminated in the club's winning CQWW DX in 1981 (followed by a repeat victory two years later). For more details, read Ed's article on the same topic by following the "Club History" link on the web site. And we have won WPX at least six times. The first time in the mid-80's was a new WPX club record of 38 million points! (For reference, the current club record appears to be the Contest Club of Finland's effort last year at 250M points). It's not just better operators, antennas or software; rather, it's clear that WPX has grown enormously in popularity in recent years.

Kenny, K2KW, posed an interesting question to me by email prior to the meeting. He wondered if it was a good idea to work up people's enthusiasm for WPX, getting members committed to spending their own money for contest expeditions, if we couldn't go all out and really be triumphant next year.

During our discussion of WPX, I posed this question to the assembled multitudes, and the roar came back: Yes, we can do it and it's going to be an exciting experience. There was universal agreement that with a combination of strong efforts from good stations in California, coupled with maximal use of club super-stations abroad, and a substantial effort at expeditioning, we should be able not only to win the contest, but also to break the club record.

There was also discussion on how open we should be about our attack on WPX. We've decided on a sort of compromise. In the JUG, we will talk about general principles and try to keep the thread hot and current, so that everyone can see what we're doing and how much they can help.

However, our equivalent of WA6VEF's "secret JUG inserts" of 1981 will be a section on the Members section of the web site (ask W0YK or me if you've forgotten your password.) In our 21st Century, internet-ready secret inserts, we will discuss specific plans, including score pledges, availability of contest expedition sites, planned expeditions, activation of contest stations in California, etc. A note will be posted on the home page reminding members to check for the latest news, so be sure to stay tuned in via internet.

The discussion on WPX was wide-ranging. We came up with the following principles to win it for the club:

- 1) Put forth a major effort from good stations in California. Good scores can be achieved from California. Carl, AI6V, volunteered to be the US station coordinator. Barry, K6ST, volunteered to comb through past results to look for non-NCCC members in our territory who could be signed up.
- 2) Where appropriate, go up a category, regardless of where that puts you in the standings for that category. For example, in WPX, single ops can

work only 36 hours, but multis can go the full 48 hours. Even with one transmitter, if you can get someone else (who would not otherwise be contributing a score) to share the load, entering multi-single will allow your station to be used 48 hours, with fresher operators, and resulting higher score. Similarly, if a station has the capability to have two transmitters on simultaneously, consider a multi-multi operation, even though it's not competitive against larger multi-multi setups. There was a general consensus that spotting nets aren't helpful in WPX due to high error rate in the spots (and the high availability of multis anyway).

- 3) Use rare prefixes. Either borrow someone's 2x1 callsign, or get a special assignment from the FCC. My understanding of portable ops is that you can choose any valid prefix. If you are at a modest station, then choose an interesting portable identifier, like W7ABC/KQ6 (though a stronger station might actually have a higher rate with a simple prefix, as K6LL/7 seems to have every year)
- 4) Go all out in SSB. If you can devote only one weekend to WPX, there are many more points to be had in the SSB contest at the end of March than in the CW version at the end of May. For example, using 2000 published results, the median SOAB HP score worldwide was 10M in SSB and 6M in CW (for the U.S.A., it was 8M versus 4M). For multi-multi's the difference was even more striking: the median of the top 5 M/M's worldwide was 43M on SSB and 14M on CW.
- 5) Maximize efforts from overseas contest stations owned by club members, such as HC8N and P49V, ZF2NT and others.
- 6) Encourage members to go on special expeditions for the contest. A major contribution to the club score has to come from ad hoc expeditions. There are lots of QTH's now available. See K2KW's web site www.dxholiday.com for details. And, as mentioned above, more information will be posted on the Members section of the club website.
- 7) Design an awards program to encourage participation. Carl, AI6V, Steve, K6AW, and yours truly will work on that program.
- 8) Start a list of pledges and expeditions. We'll start this at the next meeting. For myself, I made about 6M points from home this year with two hard SOAB efforts. After looking at the various published results, I believe that if I operated from a decent expedition station SOAB (and with no particular increase in operator skills) I could reasonably make 15M in the two modes combined. I need to think about this some more, but I'm inclined to sign up at that level, then arrange my

calendar to make the time available to put in that kind of effort next year.

- 9) Volunteers are needed. Some are noted above. THANKS! I will be the overall WPX coordinator (which I am only able to do thanks to the gracious volunteering of N6RO and K6XX as SS coordinators.) We need an expedition coordinator. Kenny, K2KW, who is probably the most knowledgeable guy in the world on this subject, will work with you as a consultant.

More on SS

Well, it's now official. We did indeed get beat in last year's SS by the Society of Midwest Contesters. They mounted a truly Herculean effort. We've always said that SS was a numbers game, so here are the numbers: SMC, 14,552,734 points from 211 entries; NCCC 14,152,580 points from 123 entries; PVRC, 12,213,356 points from 146 entries. Average log scores were 69k, 115k, and 84k, respectively. These same numbers appear elsewhere in the JUG in the meeting minutes, but they are important enough to repeat.

To keep it simple, our average log score far exceeded those of both PVRC and SMC, but we needed more logs. Just four more of our average logs would have won the contest for NCCC. There must be a lesson there somewhere.

I'm very pleased to announce that Ken, N6RO, and Bob, K6XX, have agreed to be our Sweepstakes coordinators for this year's effort. They did an outstanding job last year (and, IMHO, were only beaten by a fluke combination of factors that led to SMC's great effort.)

Here's a slightly-modified recycled Sweepstakes pome (special awards at our Sweepstakes meeting in October to the first three members who can identify by email to me where else this has been published)

XX's and RO's SS Exhortation

The Club needs everyone's score
Both modes, or Ken [/Bob] will be sore.
So turn on the amps
And we'll be the champs
In the big dog's class once more!

This is going to be an exciting year for the club. We're going to win two major contests, and have lots of fun at meetings!

73, Andy, AE6Y

Fer Sale:

One tall, attractive glass, etched with statement, 'NCCC, Sweepstakes Champion, 2000'. Suitable for

the beverage of your choice (*Crow juice?... ed*) Only \$3743.99. First call with check or money order gets it.

Second Valuable offer offered: Probably not too many of you realize that I run a Gradulate Skoole here. After you graduate from Kenny's Kontest Kollege, you may enroll in my Gradulate Skoole, if you can pass the entrance exam, the personal interview, and have tuition handy (cash only). No scholarships or fellowships will be granted or accepted.

You will be trained so that you too can make it into the top 10 or 15 or 23 in the "Skoole Club" category (what else?) in the next Sweepstakes.

I've been in the wrong place at the right time--or was it the right place at the wrong time? --too many times. How do I do it? It's a secret between me and N1ND, and he ain't tole me yet.

Final Musing: Let us assign to 2 or 3 or more members, the duty to write one paragraph for the JUG on different assigned topics. For eggssample, the first could be "why every member should write a paragraph for the JUG." Then, "Is a 4 element beam really that much better than a 3 element?", "Is one computer better than another for logging?" and stuff like that. (*We've got people who could actually write those paragraphs! Any volunteers?... ed*)

Call Jack, W6ISQ

Details of the joint NCCC/MLDXCC Meeting

The July meeting will be on Saturday the 21st at 12 noon in Jackson, CA. This is the 4th annual joint meeting of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club (MLDXCC) and the Northern California Contest Club (NCCC).

Peter, W6KW will give a presentation on his monster 80m beam. This should be a very interesting program. How many of us have even seen an 80m beam?

The meeting will be a barbecue and potluck. Grilled chicken breasts and beef tri-tip, condiments, buns and plates/eating utensils will be provided by MLDXCC. NCCC will provide soft drinks and other non-alcoholic beverages. BYOB if you desire. Please bring the following to share based upon the first letter of the suffix of your callsign, and serving utensils if necessary:

A - H- Salads (potato, macaroni, fruit, green, etc.)

I - N - Relishes (assorted pickles, olives, carrot & celery sticks, veggies with dip, etc.)

O - U - Simple desserts (cookies, fresh fruit, etc.).

V - Z - Chips/dips/salsa

Talk-in will be on the Amador County Amateur Radio Club repeater, K6ARC, 146.835 minus 600 KHz, with PL of 100 if necessary.

In case of repeater failure, use the Stockton ARC repeater, W6SF, 147.165 plus 600 KHz.

Jackson is located at the intersection of State Highways 88 and 49 in Amador County, southeast of Sacramento.

Directions:

The meeting will be held at the Senior Services Center, 229 New York Ranch Road, Jackson, CA. Take State Highways 49/88 to Jackson. From the West (State Highway 88) or North (State Highway 49), go through the traffic light at 49/88 intersection and proceed to bottom of hill, turn left at the 2nd stop sign (Safeway and Chevron gas station will be on your right), onto State Highway 88 East to Lake Tahoe. Follow signs to Senior Center and turn left on Court Street (approximately 1 mile). New York Ranch Road will be the first stop sign (1/4 mile). Turn right and the Senior Center will be on the left approximately 100 yards from the intersection and behind an apartment complex (signs will direct you to "Oak Manor"). Parking is available in both the front and back. Additional parking is available next door at the Quail Hollow Professional Center with stairs at rear that lead to the Senior Center. Please do not park in the spots marked for the Oak Manor Convalescent home.

In addition to the Safeway mentioned above, if you continue South thru the stop there will be a Ralph's on the right (1/4 mile) and a Raley's on the right (1 mile).

To Jackson from the Bay Area - Take Interstate 580 East to Interstate 205 (bypass Tracy) and proceed to Interstate 5 North. Proceed North to Stockton and take State Highway 4 (Ort Lofthus Freeway) East to State Highway 99 North. Proceed North for approximately 1 mile and take State Highway 88 East to Jackson.

To Jackson from Nevada - Take Interstate 80 or State Highway 50 West to State Highway 49 and proceed South to Jackson. Or take NV/CA State Highway 395 South to State Highway 88 West to Jackson and turn right on Court Street.

From the North or Sacramento - Take State Highway 16 (Jackson Road) East to State Highway 49 and proceed South to Jackson.

From the South - Take State Highway 99 North to State Highway 88 East to Jackson.

Amador County is in the heart of the Mother Lode Gold Country. Our meeting location will be minutes from antique shops galore, 18 wineries, gold mine tours, camping and fishing sites, and the historic Chaw'se Indian Grinding Rock State Park and Jackson Rancheria Casino/Hotel. Motels/hotels and B&Bs are close by if anyone wants to make a weekend of it.

For additional information contact:

Kay, K6KO – koa@volcano.net (Phone 209-296-5577)
 Ken, K6TA – k6ta@arrl.net (Phone 209-296-5577)
 Rick, W6RKC – ab1u@snet.net (Phone 209-223-2218)
 Rick, N6XI – n6xi@arrl.net (Phone 408-867-5797)
 Shirley, N6TNW –

tnwtnx@caltel.com (Phone 209-786-2231)

This promises to be a fun event again this year -- plan to be there!

Field Day Fun at K7NV

(Kurt describes another episode, showing why we contest... ed)

Callsign Used : K7NV

Operators : K7NV, Maynard (pronounced main-nerd), and Sherlock. The cats are secret weapons, closely guarded.

Category : 2D Low Power (120W)

Default Exchange : 2D NV

BAND	QSOs	Points
80CW	34	68
40CW	332	664
20CW	656	1312
15CW	233	466
Totals	1255	2510

Final Score = 5020 points.

Comments:

I love FD. Like others testers, it is what got me started in contesting, so it's hard for me to not get on when it comes around. I didn't have the time or stuff to take a cw station out with the one local group that invited me, so I stayed in for some practice. Besides, this is pretty much a FD operation here, I just have a head start on the setup. It only takes 996 Field Days like this one to get a 5 Meg award, and we can't afford to let these golden little opportunities slip by!

Reading the rules this year I realized that the 15 minute rule for determining the transmitter class meant I'd have to wait 15 minutes between q's on the different radios as a SO2R, to be a legit 1D. That wouldn't be very much fun! So, 2D was the way to have fun...

probably not competitive with a real 2D... but this isn't even a contest, right?

This is what the score looked like before I took out the dreaded "D"s:

BAND	QSOs	Points
80CW	35	70
40CW	357	714
20CW	757	1514
15CW	270	540
Totals	1419	2838

Fun Factors:

"D" stations don't get to count other "D" stations, but they are just as much fun to work. Well, almost. The chirpy drifting guys with the sagging power are the most fun! Then, there are those "CQ FD.....2A FL" exchanges. Or, the guy that responds to a fill request of "QTH?" with "Pauxashewanee Township" (sent twice to help ya get it right). Gosh, it doesn't get much more fun than this! If you can copy it the first time, under those conditions, ya get a kitty biscuit. Oops! Let a little bit of the cat out of the bag there...

Radio Fun:

Things worked dandy here until R2 (TS930) went completely dead 1/2 Hr before the end. There's nothing like a good contest, I mean operating event, to make sure the project list has entries. Before that, I had lots of time to alternate cq's on the 2 rigs. The most fun (IMHO) is when you get simultaneous callers. Trying to get both in the log is a complete riot! Especially in this one. That happened 20-30 times and makes up for all those unanswered cq's.

It was very windy here. It lit up a noise source along the power lines east of here, that I've been chasing for a year. The noise was worst on 15, taking out most of the weak guys, but highly variable from S0 to S6 in a few seconds, just enough to bust an exchange. Listening to 2 radios at the same time, I could hear the same thing on 20M, but it was not nearly as disruptive due to a lower noise level, and higher overall signal strengths. So, ya don't have to be at an unfiltered multi transmitter site to have the same kind of fun.

Strategy:

I slept in till 1 1/2 hrs before it started, was almost coherent when it started, but the long week, and the late night Friday rewiring a new 2R experiment won, and I did the old "head dip" on the desk for an hour nap early Sunday morning.

Secret Weapon:

It's time for "the secret" to come out of the bag....all of this really, actually, happened here...

Any self-respecting cat, that is ignored long enough by their pet human, will instinctively straighten things out. Having a good contest cat on the team can make alarm clocks obsolete, and provide team spirit when no one else is around. You will not oversleep on their watch!

Now, after 18 hours in the chair, and you need to make a pit stop, and give up that juicy run frequency... don't worry, a good contest cat knows what to do... what comes naturally... lie down against the key, that thing which is the center of your attention, and fire off a bunch of RF to clear the frequency till you get back. "Bad kitty! Ok, you get the biscuit this time. Sorry, you are right, yes, I abandoned my post, and let the team down, thanks for picking up the slack! Can I have our radios back now?"

Field Day bug control is a breeze with a team that has waited all winter for this event. You leave bug control to your teammates, while you put the Q's in the log. You realizing that they are far more committed to doing their job than you are to yours, and it will likely take them right across your keyboard, bump your vfo's off frequency, and wreak general havoc with your notion of how things ought to be. But, the wise operator realizes that it is hard to find this kind of rock solid dedication to the cause, and just goes with it to maximize the team effort.

Propagation:

I thought the difference in 15M conditions between the two years was interesting. Last year, I worked very little on 15 on Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning opened up and most of the 15M stuff went in the log then. This year, 15 was better on Saturday, and most of the logged contacts occurred then. It opened Sunday morning, but was not the least bit productive.

I had last years rate sheet to watch along the way. The Sat 15M activity, caused me to go down thru the bands later this year. I tried 40 a little after sunset, but it was a zoo and didn't produce any rate. So, I hung out way later on 20, and then made more q's on 40 in less time than last year. By getting in late, it was easier to find a spot, and a better antenna this time probably helped.

Eighty meters was better this year, with only 2 TCI modem carriers, but only about 1/2 as many q's (all R2 S&P), as 40 was much more productive due to the later start. I did a similar FD thing last year (no nap), with similar overall results, so the extra mileage hasn't showed up yet. The team is really starting to gel now!

I hope everyone else had equivalent Field Day fun. I think the only thing I missed was a few brews with the boys, but my teammates frown on that activity. When we turned the gear off, we passed around the biscuits and all took a nap. That's what we really do best!

73, Kurt, K7NV

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