



Publication of the
Northern California
Contest Club



December
2004
Issue 391

NCCC Net
Thursday 9PM
3853+/-

Next NCCC Meeting

Guests are always welcome at the NCCC! Please join us.

Holiday Dinner Party

Games, Auction, Entertainment (little business!)

Dinner Choices:

- London Broil with Mushroom Sauce (\$30)
- Breast of Chicken Marsala (\$30)
- Broiled Salmon with Lemon Beurre Blanc (\$30)
- Grilled Vegetable Brochette with Wild Rice (\$25)

Each entrée is served with seasonal greens, intermezzo pasta, fresh vegetables, potato du jour, French rolls and coffee. PLUS everybody gets dessert - Chocolate Mousse! RSVP your attendance and dinner choice to [K6UFO](mailto:k6ufo) by Dec. 7th. If you don't specify a dinner choice - you get Chicken!

Date: Monday, 13 December 2004

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

Location: Michaels at Shoreline, Mountain View, California. We'll have a private meeting room. Maps on Web site - www.nccc.cc.

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Two Tango

Tom Berson, ND2T, NCCC Pres.

I will be brief: we are wonderful.

In the last Jug I wrote:

We are superbly prepared for Sweepstakes. NCCC is a nexus of expertise, talent, skill, hard work, leadership, enthusiasm, and butt-in-the chair perseverance.

The NCCC awoke with joy and eagerness at the prospect of Sweepstakes. See you in both modes. KB.

And we did it with plenty of energy, interest and inventiveness to spare. Who could have expected a spontaneous poetry slam – everything from doggerel to haiku – in the weeks between CW and SSB? I am so proud of this club.

It is too early, of course, to know whether we have achieved our external goals of retaining the gavel and setting a new record in the Unlimited Club category. But I can tell you that we have met and exceeded our internal goals of building up our operating skills, building up our stations, and building up our teamwork. These achievements have legs. They will benefit us for a long time to come. Congratulations.

- Send your logs now – no matter what size – to ARRL.

We deserve a party, and we're going to have one on 13 December. Plan on attending the NCCC Holiday Party if you are anywhere nearby. There will be camaraderie, games, and home-grown entertainment. We have booked the K6VVA puppet show (mini version). Banjoist extraordinaire N6RO will lead us in a sing along. There are still a few talent-show slots open. Contact me soon if you have something to share. Please bring something to be auctioned off to benefit the club. I hope to see you there.

- Come party.
- Bring something to be auctioned off for the club.

The 10 January meeting, somewhere TBD in the East Bay, will be about overcoming challenges like long wavelength, a small lot, and low power. N6WG recently achieved 160M WAS QRP. He used "enough wire to strain birds out of the air," and the amazing Elecraft K2, a California rig in a class of its own.

In the meanwhile, enjoy your favorite winter contests and holiday traditions. Stay safe and KB.

VP/CC Report

Dean Wood, N6DE

Sweepstakes

Congratulations to every NCCC member for a tremendous job in this year's Sweepstakes. I am extremely impressed by your dedication to operate Sweepstakes, your determination for maximum effort, your unselfishness to give up self glory for maximum NCCC

score contribution, your generosity in helping give value back to club members, and your camaraderie to come together to strongly achieve common club goals. It was truly an inspirational effort that makes me proud to be a member of the NCCC.

Sweepstakes once again proved it is the ideal club contest. Club success in Sweepstakes requires a true team effort. It is not a contest that can be won just by our world class big gun operators. It requires contributions from *all* club members, including our little pistols and new contesters. No member is ignored or left out.

It is clear to me that we continue to be a stronger club as a result of our Sweepstakes efforts. This was achieved again this year by giving value back to our club members. Value came in many different forms, of which I'll list just a few:

- 1) Station assistance – antenna and tower parties, interfacing rig control and packet into one's logging software, loan of needed station equipment, etc.
- 2) Information assistance – NCCC super check partial and auto-fill files, propagation and operating strategy details from NCCC meeting presentations, logging software tips, SS activity/pledge web form, availability of these and many more resources on the NCCC members web site, and the NCCC reflector as an invaluable help tool.
- 3) Mentoring assistance – operators participating in M/S efforts or as a S/O at a larger station where they can grow their skills, and experienced contesters

demonstrating today's contesting to station hosts who have been out of the mix for many years.

My thanks go to the NCCC members who helped make this a reality! Special thanks go to Rusty W6OAT who did a tremendous all-around job, especially with the club's HMO organization, personal communication with members, and motivation.

Submit Your Sweepstakes Log

The operating portion of the 2004 Sweepstakes is over, but the log submission phase has just started! Please don't waste your Sweepstakes effort by failing to submit your log. Regardless of your score, we need you to submit your Sweepstakes log to the ARRL.

**Sweepstakes CW log deadline:
Wednesday, December 8**
**Sweepstakes SSB log deadline:
Wednesday, December 22**

There are 3 ways to submit your Sweepstakes log:

1. E-mail your Cabrillo file the ARRL.
Address for SS CW: SSCW@arrl.org
Address for SS SSB: SSPhone@arrl.org

Please see if your log was properly received by checking the ARRL SS Logs Received web pages:

SS CW:
http://www.arrl.org/contests/claimed/logs_rx.html?con_id=74
SS SSB:
http://www.arrl.org/contests/claimed/logs_rx.html?con_id=75

2. Manually enter your non-Cabrillo log by going to the SS online form.

SS CW:
http://b4h.net/cabforms/arrlsscw_cab.php

SS SSB:
http://b4h.net/cabforms/arrlsssb_cab.php

This is a great option for those who have hand written logs under 100 QSOs.

3. Print the SS paper log entry form:

SS CW:
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/forms/sscw.pdf>

SS SSB:
<http://www.arrl.org/contests/forms/ssphone.pdf>

Mail this and your paper log by postal mail to:

November SS CW/SSB
ARRL
225 Main St.
Newington, CT 06111

Upcoming Contests

CQ Worldwide CW DX Contest
0000Z November 27 to 2400Z
November 28

ARRL 160m Contest
0200Z December 3 to 1600Z December
5

ARRL 10m Contest
0000Z December 11 to 2400Z December
12

Stew Perry Topband Challenge
1500Z December 18 to 1500Z December
19.

There will be several NCCC members active from DX locations in CQWW CW and the 10m Contest. Be sure to work them, give them a KB, and work at

least a few other stations on the bands before turning off the radio.

Station K5RC – “Radio Contesting” from Virginia City, NV

Ed Muns, W0YK

It was my good fortunate to operate the 2004 ARRL Sweepstakes CW from Tom Taormina’s fine ridge top station near Virginia City, NV. With it’s six towers, including a temporary one we erected the morning before SS, two single-op stations were able to operate in parallel from this one location, netting 409K points for the NCCC on that one CW weekend. Add the 513K points netted on the SS Phone weekend ... 922K SS points (perhaps 5% of the NCCC club score) were contributed to the NCCC from this single location! So, how did Tom’s FB station come into being?

Well, to understand the station objectives, you have to go back to 1959 when Tom was first licensed as Novice WV2GGB in Long Island, NY. Unbeknownst to him at that time, earlier versions of N6RO and N6AA were nearby neighbors. While Tom’s main contest focus at the time was VHF, he did enter SS as a Novice in 1959 for no particular reason. The bug bit and continued on through his move to the Houston area where he won CW SS in 1976 as AA5LES (aka WA5LES) with 1218 Q’s and paper logging! He moved on to Multi-Single SS with K5LZO and they dominated that SS mode for a number of years. The ARRL 10-Meter Contest was his favorite, though, and he set a number of records from his south Texas location with seven towers

ranging from 120-140’. In his tenth consecutive year, however, a vehicle ran into the guy wires of the ten meter tower, dropping the structure and erasing his bid for another record.

After Tom moved to his third call sign of K5RC, he and K5GA dominated the Multi-Single CW and Phone CQWW records for several years. Always looking for new challenges in contesting, Tom helped NA5R (now W5FU) build his big multi-op station. Contest life was good until the 1983 hurricane swept through and took down 13 tall towers across the K5RC and NA5R QTHs. Tom was instrumental in organizing the XE2FU Field Day style contest expedition for ARRL DX Contests. Not content to operate and dominate contests, Tom co-founded the NAQP in 1985 at the ARRL convention in Louisville, KY. We’ve all been enjoying this fine domestic contest now since 1986 and it continues to build in popularity. Tom also mentored budding young contesters such as K5ZD and K5GN who often guest-op’d at his station on weekends away from college. This, of course, also provided sweat labor during the summer to maintain and expand the antenna installation. Randy even got snookered into helping paint Tom’s house one year!

I guess if one grew up in Long Island and suffered through the Houston environment of hurricanes, bugs, snakes and humidity, it isn’t so unusual for Tom and Midge, K7AFO, to end up just down the road from The Moonlight Bunny Ranch near Virginia City, NV! Actually, Tom’s consulting business could be homed anywhere since he travels all over the US for clients. Ten years ago, he and Midge added “new

QTH hunting” to their business trip objectives and explored all manner of new locations throughout the country. Northwestern Nevada was the winner and the current KB ridge top location at 6500’ was the specific target that they moved into seven years ago.

Tom kind of considered himself “retired” from contesting, but couldn’t really expunge it from his blood, so he decided to put up a tower or two to could keep his hand in NAQP, his brainchild from decades earlier. He had had enough of multiple tall towers, tens of antennas and all the maintenance that goes along with such an antenna farm. So, the initial goal was to build a competitive SO2R domestic contest station. Tom actually won NAQP the first year in Virginia City and K7BV dominated SS in both CW and Phone from Tom’s station before Dennis moved back to Connecticut with the ARRL and is now into VHF contesting. In a recent NAQP, Tom broke the Nevada record. Simple 80m wire dipoles strung between short towers on the edge of the ridge are proving lethal in this 100-watt contest.

Then along comes Rusty, W6OAT, with his SS ideas for NCCC domination of the unlimited club competition, and Tom’s re-excitement in Ham radio contesting was ratcheted up another notch as he re-invented his Ham radio contesting once again. He really got enthused by the club competition and schemed about how to wring the most points out of a single location. Soon, there were six towers and a handful of wooden poles for a very impressive and (relatively) low-budget antenna field that easily accommodates two full-out KB SS stations. Parlaying the Family station

rule in SS, the current K5RC/K7AFO layout accommodates a 24-hour operation from the SO2R station and two HMO operations from the second SO1R station. Without filtering, there is surprisingly little inter-station interference. The only sub-optimization is that normally the two stations must be on different bands. I therefore tend to think of this arrangement as “1.9 stations” due to the slightly reduced QSOs of each station as they share bands during high rate times. Although, Tom and I found ourselves both on 10 meters during SS CW, running pileups and not aware of each other. Kurt, K7NV, was HMO on Saturday (call sign K7RC) while Tom was HMO on Sunday as K5RC, using the same equipment as allowed under the SS Family rule (K7AFO “owned” the equipment on Saturday when Kurt operated).

The SO2R station features TS-950 and TS-940 radios, Alpha 87A and 86 amps, Array Solutions SO2R switching and WriteLog. The SO1R station has a TS-930 radio, Henry 3K amp and WriteLog. There are enough antennas to dedicate separate band-antennas to each station and still have some spares left over! The SO2R position currently uses Towers #1 and #2 (see table) plus an 80-meter horizontal dipole strung between towers. The SO1R station uses Towers #4 and #6 and a second 80-meter horizontal dipole. Band pass filtering would undoubtedly improve inter-station interference which really wasn’t that bad. While I heard the other station on some bands at some times, it didn’t detract from my operation. I suspect this relatively low interference is due to the tower spacing and having most antennas side-to-side of each when oriented at 75 degrees. Each station’s computer is

networked wirelessly at 2.4Gb to Tom's business computers and this home network is connected into the ISP via wireless as well. The keyboard and mouse on the SO2R station are another wireless technology and all this worked flawlessly throughout SS CW. The Internet packet network was up 100%.

One of the advantages of ridge top locations is that tall towers actually decrease antenna performance. Accordingly, 40' towers are the mainstay of these locations that a few of us enjoy. After years in the flat lands of Colorado with 120-150' towers, I was amazed to experience optimum 10-20 meter performance at 30-40' here in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Tom's QTH is a finger off the ridge that drops off in most directions, a good 270 degree sweep of the most desired directions. He did put a 75' tower up the hill to the north that peeks off in that direction to give the farm an awesome 360-degree shot at the world. Still, the station goal is domestic, not DX, contests which keeps a bit of control on escalating the installation to multiple long-boom laser beams.

Another aspect of Tom's current contesting goals is getting Nevada and its Ham radio occupants out of rarity and into the garden-variety multiplier category. He and Kurt regularly visit the local Ham club and give presentations on HF contesting and DXing. He has inspired and helped Hams in northern Nevada get into, or back into, contesting. Notable examples during SS CW last weekend were the newly erected N7TR station, operated by John, N7ON, and the K7AO station that was literally put together on Friday with Tom's help as I was driving over to operate W7RN at the K5RC QTH. K7AO (Ken) entered SS

for the first time in 30 years and the first time using computer logging! He added 67K to the NCCC club score, all S&P.

Tom keeps us updated on the Virginia City station via the Ham radio portion of his web site at http://www.consultpr.com/K5RC_2004.htm. Stop by now and again to see what's happening over there. Tom is a real inspiration for new and returning Nevada contesters as well as a major pillar of the NCCC club competition team efforts ... the club's MMM (multi-operator, multi-transmitter, multi-location), giving back into contesting after many years of deep personal satisfaction and achievement.

Tower	Hgt.	Bands	Antenna(s)
1	75'	40-10	F12 C39XRN
2	50'	15-10	6el. 15, 5 el. 10
3	54'	20-10	Tennadyne Log Periodic
4	35'	20-10	F12 C31XR
5	30'	80	Future Tennadyne Log
6	40'	40	Hy-Gain 402BA
Pole 1	40'	160	Sloper
Pole 2	25'	440MHz	Repeater Antenna



Kurt, K7NV, and Ed, W0YK, doing SS CW from K5RC.

Member Photos



Matt, WX5X, operating SS Phone 04 from K5RC.



Josh, W6XU, assembling antenna in preparation for SS CW.



K5RC antenna farm.



November 8, 2004 aurora photo taken in Blair, NE.



Tom, himself, K5RC manning the station in 2003.

Happy Holidays To All.

--CL--

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