



Publication of the Northern California Contest Club



Issue 500

January 2014

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

Wednesday, January 8th, 2014

Time:

6:00pm Schmooz, 6:30pm Dinner, 7:00pm Program

NCCC - REDXA Joint Meeting
(Redwood Empire DX Association)
Petaluma, CA

Location:

Boulevard Cafe & Grill; 1096 Petaluma Blvd. North;
Petaluma, CA. Phone: (707) 773-0925

Program:

"K9W Commemorative DXpedition To Wake Atoll"
by John Miller, K6MM

To register:

Please RSVP to Tom nccc.treasurer@gmail.com



President's Report for January.

This is the 500th issue of The Jug (or the Contest Jug as it was originally titled). Assuming that it's been published monthly, that means The Jug first appeared sometime in 1971, when I was a graduate student in Hawaii possessing an expired General Class license.

Recently I came into possession of a box of ancient NCCC documents, including 1000s of pages of correspondence, meeting and BOD minutes, and thick paper logs from WPXs and CQPs past. One document in the pile is titled "The Northern California Contest Club Historical Trivia Handout", which was probably prepared in 1981, the latest year listed for "year joined".

The typewritten document lists the 25 charter members of the NCCC:

- W6RJ N7NG K6AUC N6TJ W6OAT
- K6PU W6CF N6RO K6EBB K6ERT
- K6ERV N6BJ W6HRB N6HH WN6HSJ
- K4TKM/6 N6DA K6VVA W6WX W6NV
- K7INE/6 WA6IQM WB6KIG K6RV N6KB

The document also lists recipients of the "Contester of the Year" award. Congratulations to N6RO, the 1971 winner, and to W6OAT who received the award two years later.



Northern California Contest Club

Excellence In Amateur Radio Contesting

Officers:

President	Alan Eshleman	K6SRZ	doctore@well.com	Penngrove CA
Vice President /Contest Chair	Alan Maenchen	AD6E	ad6e@arrl.net	San Jose, CA
Secretary/Treasurer	Tom Epperly	NS6T	tepperly@gmail.com	Livermore CA
Past President	Dean Wood	N6DE	cqden6de@gmail.com	Sunnyvale CA
Director	Fred Jensen	K6DGW	k6dgw@foothill.net	Auburn CA
Director	Steve Dyer	W1SRD	w1srd@arrl.net	Redwood City CA
Director	Jim Brown	K9YC	k9yc@arrl.net	Santa Cruz CA

Volunteers:

New Member Mentor	Al Rendon	WT6K	wt6k@arrl.net
Charter Member	Rusty Epps	W6OAT	w6oat@sbcglobal.net
Awards Chairs	Joanna Dilley	K6YL	joanna.k6yl@gmail.com
	Rebar Rebarchik	N6DB	rebar@hamilton.com
CQP Chair	Chris Tate	N6WM	ctate@ewnetinc.com
CQP Certificates	Andy Faber	AE6Y	ae6y@arrl.net
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
JUG Editor	Ian Parker	W6TCP	w6tcpian@gmail.com

Thursday Night Contesting:

NCCC—Sprint	Ken Keeler	N6RO	kenkeeler@jazznut.com
NS Ladder	Bill Haddon	N6ZFO	haddon.bill@gmail.com
Slow NS (SNS)	Chris Tate	N6WM	ctate@ewnetinc.com

NCCC Net

Thursday 8 PM
 Freq: 3.610 +/-

NCCC

Monthly meetings
 take place on the
 second Monday of
 each month !

NCCC Membership Information

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

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).

The box of papers also included a packet of passport photos and information on how to apply for a license to operate from Montserrat, apparently part of someone's plans for a VP2M contest expedition. Can someone identify this small, faded photo?



Who is this? It's a passport photo for a DXpedition to Montserrat

I also learned that at the May 1978 meeting ZS6WW was the guest speaker, discussing "contesting in S. Africa and the political situation in...Rhodesia." Part of the situation, of course, was that the future President of South Africa was imprisoned on Robben Island and Rhodesia had yet to become Zimbabwe.

Most of the contest logs in this box of documents are printed by hand—some spanning 1000s of QSOs—but there are a few flickers of using a computer. One set of meeting notes includes a request to help with preparing a dupe sheet for a "commadore".

Any aspiring NCCC historian is welcome to borrow this dusty box and see what else he or she can learn.

Now to the business of today.

Likely by the time you read this, the 2014 RTTY Roundup will be history and, we hope, NCCC will have once again won the unlimited club championship. As in every other focus contest, no log is too small.

We will be meeting in Petaluma on WEDNESDAY, January 8, at the Boulevard Café. The speaker will be John Miller, K6MM, reporting on the recent very successful DXpedition to Wake Island. Carpooling is recommended.

I hope to see you there.

73,
Alan/K6SRZ



Dodge the Dog: faithful shack companion who turns one year-old on January 8 and plans to be at our meeting.

Archeological Dig Through Old JUGS Reveals Ancient NCCC Contest

Bill Haddon, N6ZFO Contest Director for NCCC Thursday Night Contesting.
Kelseyville CA

One might think that NCCC Thursday Night Contesting, initiated by N6ZFO and a team including N6RO, K7NV, K6VVA and others in 2002/3 was a unique contesting experience for the club. An archeological dig into the ancient JUGs reveals a shocking truth . . . mid-week contests called weekly Mini-tests and monthly Maxi-tests were held on Tuesday nights in 1976-79. In these olden days club members gathered on 75 meters for the contest net, an important predecessor to today's reflector. The nets were an important between-meeting communication mode for NCCCr's in the days before e-mail reflectors were even a gleam in the eye of Al Gore.

The Mini-test concept arose out of the SCCC and NCCC weekly contest nets, which were held one hour apart on Tuesday nights on 3815. These sessions lasted about half an hour, leaving a 30-min etheric void to be filled by, what else, a contest. The November, 1977 edition of the JUG encourages NCCC members to participate in the Tuesday night net to "Find out what's happening in the club and sharpen your skills by participating in the weekly Mini-Test." The first mention of mini-tests is on page 4 of the Sept '76 JUG during the administration of – who else – Ken, W6PAA better known these days as N6RO.

NCCC Contest Chair Bruce Swearingen N6TU (N6-Totally Useless, formerly WB6LPK), promoted and led many of these 1970's Tuesday night contests. The details appear in the following JUG's now archived at <http://nccc.cc/newsletter.html> . September and October 1976; May, July, August and December 1977; January, May and August, October and November 1978 and April 1979 (for the March '79 mini-test). Announcements to a national audience were made by notices in the fledgling National Contest Journal and results were sometimes published there.

Every contest needs an exchange. Both high creativity and humor prevailed. Really, shoe size, waist size and, especially, age were popular exchange elements. Good grief. And if you think that the 30-minute NCCC Sprint (NS) and NS Ladder event were quick . . . the *10-minute*, *5-minute* and even *3-minute* between-net Mini-tests set a speed-demon standard. Scandalously, some winners of the weekly extravaganzas were from outside the NCCC. Unlike today's Thursday night events, 1970's midweek Mini-tests often included that other mode, or even mixed mode. While most were low power, an HP category existed sometimes. Noting the now extinct typewriter font, here's an example of a Mini-test contest result from the May 1978 JUG:

MINI CONTEST RESULTS

April 18. Exchange: Serial number and waist size. Multiplier: Number of different waist sizes. Five minutes, Both modes. Score only.

<u>Phone</u>			<u>Both modes</u>	
WA6MFJ	600	(1)	WA7MIN	840
N6UR	180	(2)	WA6JUD	825
WA6TFV (LP)	20	(3)	WB6DSV (LP)	525

WB6ION (B) 385, AA6UO (B)LP 360, KØGU (B) 150, WD6CHF (B)LP 20.

Maxi-tests, sometimes called Maxi-mini-tests were created and promoted in the new NCJ. Part of the rule set:

4. Contest Period: 0330-0430UTC (wednesday GMT) Tuesday, June 15 (one hour). The second test will be Tuesday, July 12. Maxi-Tests will be held each 2nd Tuesday of each following month.
5. Mode: CW and PHONE
6. Bands: 160, 80, 40, 20 Meters. Suggested Frequencies: 3530/3830 UP, 7030/7230 UP, 14030/14230 UP, and 1810 UP both modes, last 5 minutes.
7. Exchange: Serial number (start with #1 please) followed by ARRL section (or country) followed by nickname.
EXAMPLE: CQ MAXI N6TR
N6TR DE N6TU
N6TU NR 72 LA TREE N6TR
N6TR QSL NR 75 SCV BRUCE N6TU
QSL QRZ N6TR
8. Valid contact: Stations may be worked once per band-mode (8 possible!)
9. Scoring: [(PHONE QSO's X 3) + (CW QSO's X 5)] X (SECTIONS + COUNTRIES)
= FINAL SCORE
New multipliers count only once regardless of band/mode.

Here is a typical result sheet for Maxi-tests held in June and July of 1977. You may recognize a call or two . hint. . K6XO is in fact Alan, KO7X.

		<u>RESULTS: NCCC MAXI CONTESTS</u>						
<u>TOP TEN JUNE</u>		<u>TOP TEN JULY</u>						
1	K6LL	10080	1	N6CJ	8800	55	32	CW
2	N6TU	8520	2	K6SE	5600	50	25	Mix
3	K6SE	7875	3	N6TU	5200	60	20	Mix
4	N6BT	6650	4	KØEE/6	4940	52	19	CW
5	WA6DYZ	6125	5	W6UE	4830	42	23	CW
6	W6CF	5280	6	K6XO	3952	48	19	Mix
7	WB6ION(WA6VEF)	4320	7	W9WI	3200	32	20	CW
8	N6CN	3000	8	WA6VEF	2940	42	14	CW
9	WB6PKA	2115	9	K6STI	2870	41	14	CW
10	K6HIH	1650	10	N6VV	2771	43	17	Mix

We note the similarity to the contests sponsored by the new CWOps group – short weekly contests with longer contests held less frequently.

In the December 1977 JUG N6TU proposed a ladder competition: “Beginning in January [‘78] I propose that the Maxi-tests be continued as before. However the new Maxi will be a series of contests with each test counting toward an overall standing.” Detailed rules appeared in the January 1978 JUG, noting plans to publish them in the NCJ. But the series was never held. The May 1979 JUG noted that 75m net check-ins on 3815 had dwindled to an average of four, and this decline precipitated the apparent demise of Tuesday night contesting in the NCCC.

Much later NCCC began Thursday night practices for major contests. We transformed the Thursday night time spot into the NCCC Sprint Ladder, eventually adding weekly the between-ladder NCCC Sprints, NS for short. N6ZFO manages the ladders and Tom, N3ZZ takes care of the weekly NS events, having succeeded Ken, N6RO in that task. NS and NS Ladder were initiated in 2002 and continue with high enthusiasm and good participation across the country from about 100 contesters, averaging about 25 per week for NS and 35 or so for the triennial ladder competitions featuring savory wine awards from W0YK. The Ladder competitions were described in detail by N6ZFO in the November/December 2009 National Contest Journal, p. 31.

W6P at Pacificon 2013



W6P at Pacificon 2013. Joanna K6YL and San KK6GMH (left) while she makes her very first HF contacts. San joined NCCC shortly after Pacificon, and she even got on the air for both Sweepstakes phone and Sweepstakes CW with points contributed to the NCCC team score.

February Jug Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles for the February edition of JUG is Thursday 30th January. Please send your material to the JUG newsletter editor, Ian W6TCP at w6tcpian@gmail.com

November Sweepstakes SSB

by Tom NS6T
29 December 2013

November Sweepstakes SSB 2013 was my first full-time, single-operator contest from an excellent station. I've done a full-time efforts from my modest QTH station, and I've contributed to multi-operator efforts at the excellent K6LRG. SS SSB was going to be my first opportunity to have a great station all to myself.

This story starts with a relationship built through carpooling to NCCC meetings. Because we live close together, Larry W4UAT and I have been carpooling to most of the NCCC meetings this year. This gave me the opportunity to ask him if I could operate SS SSB from his station, and he graciously said yes.

Larry's station consists of an Icom 746 Pro II, an AL800H amplifier, and a Rigexpert standard interface to his PC. There were three antennas available: an 80m dipole, a 40m dipole that Larry tuned for the phone part of the band specifically for this contest, and a 4 element Steppir at 72 feet.

Preparation

Larry's station was well prepared for use by a guest operator. The amplifier has guides for each band, and the tuner settings were all prepared. As I mentioned above, Larry also deployed an extra 40m dipole tuned for the phone part of the band to help support the effort. Larry invited me over twice to go over how to use each part of his station from the logging software (N1MM) to transceiver controls and amplifier settings.



On my end, I used a USB microphone and the open source sound editor Audacity, audacity.sf.net, to record and edit WAV files for N1MM. I wasn't sure whether I would want the extra clarity of phonetics (i.e., November Sierra Six Tango) or the speed of NS6T (En Ess Six Tee). I recorded lots of alternatives, so I would have whatever I needed on hand. I used Audacity to remove dead air at the beginning & ending of the recordings. I also followed by recommendations from www.n3me.net/audacity.html which involved running three filters: High Pass Filter set close to 200, a Low Pass Filter set close to 2200, and the Amplify filter.

In addition to the basic WAV files for CQ, callsign, exchange, and thanks, I also recorded numbers. N1MM can generate audio for numbers based on the available WAV files. For example for 223, it would play 200.wav followed by 20.wav and finally 3.wav to produce audio for two hundred twenty-three. It turns out that I never needed to use this feature, but I had the files available if my voice gave out or something.

I went over to Larry's house for the Friday night practice on the day before the contest. We set the audio levels, and I tried out the various aspects of the station. It was good practice for the actual event.

Going into the contest, I had three goals: make at least 813 QSOs, get a Sweep, and have fun. The first two goals would both be personal bests, and 813 QSOs would earn me a KB-1000 from the NCCC because I had 187 CW QSOs from SS CW.

I saw this contest as a chance to prove myself for good or bad, so I was kind of anxious. Chris N6WM encouraged me to relax, realize that I am operating with friends, and have confidence in Larry's station. I was worried that I would run out of steam after a few hours. My previous multi-operator efforts were kind of like sprints. I would operate for a few hours and then turn the station over to someone else. For this contest, I would need to operate for 8-10 hours in a stretch with no stopping. I couldn't afford to get too wound up and run out of energy before the contest was over.

The Contest

Larry suggested that I start with 15m and then periodically check whether 10m was active. I was thinking "keep relaxed" and "don't stress out," and it worked. After about 15-20 minutes, Larry came in and adjusted the rig blaster audio level up. He had been doing some JT-65 in the morning, and he lowered the audio levels on the Rigblaster.

I worked the first 3.5 hours on 15m before my rate started to fall off, and then I switched to 20m for the next 2.5 hours. I spent a little more than an hour on 40m before switching to 80m. Larry told me that his antenna is very effective on 80m, and my experience bore it out.

I spent most of my time running, but I occasionally did some search and pounce to get rare multipliers like Newfoundland and the Virgin Islands. Otherwise, most of the multipliers came to me, and I got my first Sweep.

At about midnight, I called it a night and headed off to the bed that Larry prepared for me. I slept for about 5 hours before getting up to eat breakfast and to get back on the air.

Band	QSOs	Pts	Sec
80m	206	412	7
40m	68	136	3
20m	256	512	10
15m	443	886	61
10m	36	72	2
Total	1009	2018	83

Table 1: Summary results for SS SSB 2013

A funny thing happened Sunday morning on 10m. I was pretty tired after taking my sleep break, and I was still trying to clear the cobwebs. I was calling CQ, and I heard a 2E0SWF coming back. I realized that something was wrong, but it took me a few seconds to realize that I had a DX station responding to my CQ – not a regular occurrence from my QTH station. My next challenge was figuring out how to log them without messing up my Sweepstakes log. I found a piece of paper and logged them manually. I ended up working 3 or 4 DX stations Sunday morning.

Overall, Larry's station performed perfectly, and I met all my goals. I exceed my QSO goal, and I got 1009 total QSOs. I got my first sweep, and I had lots of fun. I was able to work for hours without getting over stressed while maintaining a decent rate. I can certainly see areas to grow, but I am still pretty happy about my first solo effort.

I am guessing that there are other club members who would host operators at their station, and there are probably contesters with modest stations who would be willing to operate. I would encourage you to make use of meetings and the email reflector to make serendipitous connections.



RTTY Contesting

Ed Muns, W0YK

At the September 2003 NCCC meeting, a RTTY contesting presentation was made by AC6JT, K6UFO, N6DE and W6ZZZ (sk). A sub-theme of the presentation was to rally club members to get on for the upcoming ARRL RTTY Round-Up in January 2004. The ARRL had just initiated a club competition for that contest and these guys wanted NCCC to win it. I had never operated the RTTY mode, much less in a contest, but I was mildly curious to learn how the mode worked.

As the speakers described a RTTY QSO, the main point was that the decoding hardware and/or software technology simply printed callsigns, exchanges, or anything sent by the other station. I remarked, "What's the point of this?! The PC copies everything and could just as well stuff it in the log without the operator doing anything. Why couldn't I just set all this up and then leave the room to drink beer while my station worked the contest?"

I was quickly informed that it is not that simple and there are critical things for an operator to do. While I remained skeptical, I felt obligated as a club member, especially a club member with a bad attitude about the RTTY mode for contesting, to try and get RTTY working for the Round-Up 4 months later. I operated the RTTY Round-Up, convinced I could prove this was a stupid way to contest. My plan was thwarted, though, when I actually enjoyed the contest. I remarked afterward, "What a hoot!!" Several months later when I received a plaque for SO HP Pacific Division, I was hooked. Even more exciting was that the NCCC did in fact win that first RTTY Round-Up club competition gavel.

My original reaction (this is boring; the computer decodes everything) is the fundamental distinction of RTTY as compared to CW and SSB. I've heard many people respond as I first did by watching football, reading a book, processing email, etc all while "working RTTY". It occurred to me that this criticism of the mode might actually hold a big upside if we looked at it differently. Being relieved of using my brain for decoding CW, or listening to SSB, I could use that available mental capacity to hone other aspects of my contesting skill set.

For example, one of the quickest and best ways to learn SO2R technique and build expertise is to do so with the RTTY mode. I now had plenty of bandwidth to learn the timing and syncing of two radios. I could experiment with different ways of interleaving QSOs. And, virtually all the SO2R skill I developed was directly transferable to CW. With SO2R itself second nature, I now the mental capacity to add back in my CW skills.

Same thing for using a second receiver in one radio to search and pounce on the same band that I am running on. Much easier to develop the station and personal skill using the RTTY mode and then transfer it back to CW and SSB.

The second benefit I discovered was that the diversity of being able to contest in three modes added spark and interest to my favorite hobby. I'm well aware that my favorite mode is CW, but interleaving RTTY and occasionally some SSB kept the spark in the game for me.

Thirdly, I have enjoyed the technical challenges of both the hardware and software associated with RTTY contesting. Because we rely on technology for decoding the RTTY bit stream, I am always seeking to understand and implement better ways to decode with lower error rates. The more I learn, the more I realize that there is much, much more to reliably decoding RTTY signals. It has been fascinating to see a RTTY signal print perfectly well on my screen when I could hear no trace of the signal in my headphone, nor see any glimpse of it on a high quality bandscope. The technology was truly pulling the signal out of noise.

When first learning to setup for RTTY operation, it seemed like a veritable blizzard of details. There were unfamiliar terms to digest and, like many things, there was a range of complexity possible to make it seem overwhelming at first. After a while I realized that almost as simple as CW. For transmit I use homebrew FSK/PTT keying cables that use exactly the same level-shifter, open-collector NPN transistor (and base resistor) as is used for CW and PTT keying. Just like CW, there are commercial interfaces of varying complexity, all the way up to the multi-featured microHAM boxes.

For receive, there is the additional connection of routing the receiver audio to the RTTY modem, typically implemented in a PC software program that uses the soundcard. This connection is often as simple as a standard Radio Shack stereo phone plug cable between the receiver and soundcard.

The third piece is the RTTY modem itself which performs the dual function of decoding the receive audio to print the received character stream and encoding the transmitted characters into the Baudot bit stream that is transmitted. Two of the best RTTY modems available are well-supported freeware programs that are widely used (MMTTY and 2Tone).

Three of the most popular contest loggers (WriteLog, N1MM Logger and Win-Test) all allow MMTTY and/or 2Tone to integrate seamlessly to provide as excellent a user experience as in CW and SSB with these loggers. I advocate sticking with the logger you are familiar with for CW and SSB when you get started with RTTY. Why make it more difficult by also coming up to speed on a new logger?

The RTTY contesting world is blessed with an outstanding website with detailed tutorials for beginner and expert alike. Nearly everyone involved with this mode is a heavy user of www.rttycontesting.com, authored by Don Hill, AA5AU, RTTY contester extraordinaire.

So, what about you? Does it sound intriguing to try something new in contesting? Perhaps leverage your experience with RTTY back into CW or SSB? Can you broaden your thinking to get beyond the common belief that “RTTY is boring”?

NAQP Club Challenge - Dean - N6DE

2013 NAQP	NCCC Points	NCCC Participants	NCCC Total Score	SMC Points	SMC Participants	SMC Total Score	PVRC Points	PVRC Participants	PVRC Total Score
January CW	5,468,888	80	437,511,040	4,503,573	89	400,817,997	4,332,246	52	225,276,792
January SSB	4,155,569	89	369,845,661	3,794,256	79	299,746,224	2,638,311	71	187,320,096
February RTTY	2,448,475	55	134,666,125	1,469,915	43	63,206,345	639,862	29	18,555,998
July RTTY	1,035,445	56	57,984,892	1,136,764	37	42,060,268	259,266	24	6,222,384
August CW	2,895,018	62	179,491,116	2,060,570	58	119,513,060	2,222,051	37	82,215,887
August SSB	1,279,234	65	83,150,210	1,506,684	65	97,934,460	1,245,121	34	42,334,114
Grand Total			1,262,649,044			1,023,278,354			561,925,271

**NAQP 2013
NCCC Highlights**

# of NAQPs entered	# of NCCC members
6	17
5	13
4	14
3	25
2	34
1	46
Total	149

Stations that hosted at least one NCCC guest operator

K6LRG	W6NL
K6TD	W6NV
KE1B	W6OAT
KH6LC	W6PW
N6NF	W6SL
N6RO	W6YX
N6XI	W7RN
NW6P	

NCCC 6-timers	NCCC 5-timers	NCCC 4-timers
K3FIV	K6DGW	K6CSL
K6GT	K6SRZ	K6GHA
K6LRN	K6TIG	K6MP
K6MM	K9YC	K6ST
K6OK	KM6I	K6YL
K6UFO	N2NS	KO6LU
K6XX	N6DB	KZ2V
N6DQ	N6DZR	N3RC
N6EE	N6ML	N6NUL
N6XI	W1SRD	NF1R
N6ZFO	W4UAT	NS6T
N7MH	W6SX	W6CT
ND2T	WK6I	W6EB
W6OAT		W6JTI
W6RKC		
WB6JJJ		
WU6W		

**Top 10 NCCC
S/O Scores**

Callsign	Score
N7MH	770,723
N5KO	631,110
K9YC	586,601
WC6H	580,544
N6KT	575,515
N6ZFO	565,231
NQ6N	525,705
K6SRZ	458,624
N6RO	389,989
W1RH	388,970



30 Contesting Tips

30 Ham Radio Contesting Tips:

- 1) [Schedule your Contests](#). The really great thing about contesting is they are regularly scheduled — regardless of great propagation, DXpeditions or the mood of the sun.
- 2) [Create a contest goal](#). Goals are good and help motivate you while participating.
- 3) [Contest on your terms](#). Contest for and be motivated by your reasons. Not everyone is out to win the contest; it could be you want to learn a new mode.
- 4) [Have an operating plan](#). Having a plan provides you guidance for the contest and a baseline to compare against reality in the midst of battle.
- 5) [Test equipment before the contest](#). You do want your stuff to work, right?
- 6) [Update Multiplier Files](#). Downloading the latest ensures you won't miss a juicy multiplier during the contest.
- 7) [Read the contest rules](#). You'd be surprised how often this bites you — even experienced contesters.
- 8) [Work a contest one month before the real contest](#). The sun rotates once a month (27 days)...so work a contest the month before to experience the propagation you will have before the one you really want to concentrate on later.
- 9) [Test ergonomics](#). Sitting in a chair contesting a long while will test how well your station is laid out for operating.
- 10) [Have a guest op checklist](#). What should you bring as a guest op?
- 11) [Compete with a partner](#). Work a contest with someone in your club (together or at your individual stations). Discuss what worked and what didn't about the contest.
- 12) [Review Newsletter for Contest DXpeditions](#). Lots of people travel for contests. Make sure you take a look at the list from your favorite ham radio newsletter.
- 13) [Have propagation plan](#). Propagation programs can suggest what will be open where. Having a propagation plan can give you a guide while contesting.
- 14) [Filter your packet connection](#). If the contest allows packet, filter the connection to match up with your station.
- 15) [Accurate logging](#). A contest is about working stations — and logging them accurately. If you don't you get penalized.

- 16) [Send in your log](#). Even if you didn't work many stations, you can help the contest by sending in your log to help enable log checking.
- 17) [Logbook of The World](#). Want to reduce your QSL'ing chores for contests? Submit your log to Logbook of The World for instant confirmations for you and the people you contact.
- 18) [Review UBN's](#). Unique, Busted, and Not in the Log. It's how your log is viewed for accuracy.
- 19) [Have a QSL System](#). Even if you use Log of the World, testers get a lot of QSL card requests. Have a system for processing them.
- 20) [Use a grey line map](#). Grey line propagation is the cat's meow. Having a visual representation of where the grey line is right now can help you point your antennas the right way.
- 21) [Learn a single band](#). Want to learn propagation on a band fast? Do a contest on a single band. You'll learn.
- 22) [Challenge your operating skill with QRP](#). Get frustrated fast. Operate a contest QRP from your station. Then learn how to get through the mess for points. It will make you a better operator.
- 23) [Do an After Action Review](#). Did we achieve our goal, what went right, what could be improved. Record the results for the next contest.
- 24) [Join a contesting club](#). Amp up your contesting knowledge and motivation.
- 25) [Learn from contesting pros](#). They are out there. They can teach you a lot.
- 26) [Leverage your strengths](#). Great CW operator? Great antennas? Whatever your strength, leverage it for the contest.
- 27) [Go on a contesting DXpedition](#). Even if it is to a different state. It's a very different experience and will teach you a lot.
- 28) [Practice CW before contests](#). Notice how much better you are at CW at the end of the contest compared to the start? You need to practice before the contest.
- 29) [Participate on a contesting team](#). Many contests offer team (versus club) entries. Join a team to up your motivation for the contest.
- 3) [Find joy in contesting](#). It's there. You know it. Go find it.

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<http://k9jy.com/blog/2007/10/10/30-days-30-ham-radio-contesting-tips>



Contest Calendar—January page 1

AGB New Year Snowball Contest	0000Z-0100Z, Jan 1
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 1
SARTG New Year RTTY Contest	0800Z-1100Z, Jan 1
AGCW Happy New Year Contest	0900Z-1200Z, Jan 1
AGCW VHF/UHF Contest	1400Z-1700Z, Jan 1 (144) and 1700Z-1800Z, Jan 1 (432)
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 3
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 3
+ PODXS 070 Club PSKFest	0000Z-2400Z, Jan 4
WW PMC Contest	1200Z, Jan 4 to 1200Z, Jan 5
QRP ARCI Pet Rock Sprint	1500Z-1800Z, Jan 4
ARRL RTTY Roundup	1800Z, Jan 4 to 2400Z, Jan 5
EUCW 160m Contest	2000Z-2300Z, Jan 4 and 0400Z-0700Z, Jan 5
Kid's Day Contest	1800Z-2359Z, Jan 5
ARS Spartan Sprint	0200Z-0400Z, Jan 7
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 8
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, Jan 8 and 1900Z-2000Z, Jan 8 and 0300Z-0400Z, Jan 9
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 10
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 10
Old New Year Contest	0500Z-0900Z, Jan 11
UK DX BPSK63 Contest	1200Z, Jan 11 to 1159Z, Jan 12
MI QRP January CW Contest	1200Z, Jan 11 to 2359Z, Jan 12
SKCC Weekend Sprintathon	1200Z, Jan 11 to 2400Z, Jan 12



Contest Calendar—January page 2

North American QSO Party, CW	1800Z, Jan 11 to 0559Z, Jan 12
NRAU-Baltic Contest, CW	0630Z-0830Z, Jan 12
NRAU-Baltic Contest, SSB	0900Z-1100Z, Jan 12
DARC 10-Meter Contest	0900Z-1059Z, Jan 12
Midwinter Contest	1000Z-1400Z, Jan 12
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 15
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 17
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 17
LZ Open Contest	0000Z-0400Z, Jan 18
Hungarian DX Contest	1200Z, Jan 18 to 1200Z, Jan 19
North American QSO Party, SSB	1800Z, Jan 18 to 0559Z, Jan 19
ARRL January VHF Contest	1900Z, Jan 18 to 0359Z, Jan 20
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 22
CWops Mini-CWT Test	1300Z-1400Z, Jan 22 and 1900Z-2000Z, Jan 22 and 0300Z-0400Z, Jan 23
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 24
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 24
CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW	2200Z, Jan 24 to 2159Z, Jan 26
REF Contest, CW	0600Z, Jan 25 to 1800Z, Jan 26
BARTG RTTY Sprint	1200Z, Jan 25 to 1200Z, Jan 26
UBA DX Contest, SSB	1300Z, Jan 25 to 1300Z, Jan 26
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 29
QRP Fox Hunt	0200Z-0330Z, Jan 31
NCCC Sprint Ladder	0230Z-0300Z, Jan 31

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- 100W HF/6M Transceiver, gen cov. receiver • Dual DSP 32 bit • Three roofing filters - 3, 6, 15kHz • 5.8 In WQVGA TFT display • Hi-res real time spectrum scope



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- D-STAR DV mode operation • DR (D-STAR repeater) mode • Free software download • GPS A mode for easy D-PRS operation • One touch reply button (DV mode) • Wideband receiver



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