



Publication of the
Northern California
Contest Club



September
2008
Issue 436

NCCC Net
Thursday 8 PM
3610+/-

MEETING

Program:
CQP Final Plan - Rick, N6RNO
Defending the Gavel: Preliminary SS
Plan - Jim, K9YC

Date: Monday, 8 September 2008
Time: 6pm schmooz, 6:30pm dinner, 7pm program
Location: Holder's Country Inn, 998 S De Anza
Blvd, San Jose, CA 95129 (408) 244-2798
East side of De Anza Boulevard between Stevens
Creek Boulevard and Highway 85.
Dinner choices:

Salmon - \$23; Sirloin Tips & Noodles - \$22; Chicken Cordon
Bleu - \$22; Vegetarian Lasagna - \$21

Inclusive of salad, beverage (coffee, tea or soda), tax and tip.
Beer and wine may be purchased. Please RSVP to K6EU by
Friday 5 September with your dinner choice. Pay ahead of time
via PayPal or at the door.

NCCC Officers

President: [John Miller, K6MM](#)
Vice-President and Contest Chairman: [Jim Brown K9YC](#)
Secretary/Treasurer: [Tom Carney, K6EU](#)

Directors

Past President: [Bob Tellefsen, N6WG](#)
Director: [Tom Taormina, K5RC](#)
Director: [Dean Wood, N6DE](#)
Director: [Tom Berson, ND2T](#)
Honorary Director: Rusty Epps, W6OAT

Webmaster: Ed Muns, W0YK w0yk@msn.com
JUG Editor: Rob Brownstein, k6rb@baymoon.com

Zero Beat

By John Miller, K6MM

NCCC-MLDXC Joint Meeting – July 26

About 50 folks showed up at the Old Spaghetti Factory in Stockton for the joint meeting of NCCC and MLDXCC. Since most members of MLDXCC are also NCCC members, it was almost like another NCCC gathering!

The featured speaker was Arnie, N6HC, who reviewed his DXpedition to Clipperton Island (TX5C) through a series of slides and interesting stories. The audience learned a lot about the planning aspects of a DXpedition, as well as some of the cross-cultural challenges in carrying out a complex operation in a remote location.

At the meeting, three NCCC members formally joined MLDXCC: Rusty, W6OAT; Tom, K5RC and his XYL, Midge, K7AFO. That was cool. Our host, MLDXCC and Club President, Rich, NU6T, did another great job of organizing the meeting, which has become an annual favorite.

NCCC Meeting -- August 11

Thirty-six KBers attended the August NCCC meeting in Dublin. It was very nice to see some folks from that part of the Bay Area, who are not always able to attend a Peninsula meeting. We had a very full agenda for the evening:

CQP – Rick, N6RNO, shared his preliminary plans for CQP on Oct 4 & 5. He emphasized the need for committed operation in these CA counties, which at the time of the meeting were at risk of having no (or very low) participation:

- Calaveras
- Colusa
- Del Norte
- Glenn
- Humboldt
- Lassen
- Maricopa
- Mendocino
- Modoc
- Napa
- Plumas
- Shasta
- Sierra
- Stanislaus
- Sutter
- Trinity
- Tulare
- Tuolumne
- Yolo

Check the website for the latest operating plan: <http://www.cqp.org/Counties-Plan-2008.html>

Regional Volunteer Coordinators – Jim, K9YC, reviewed the list of 13 Regional Volunteer Coordinators, once again:

- Coast N of San Francisco – W6XU
- East Bay near the bay – N6WG
- East Bay to the east – N6RO
- Fresno – K2VCO
- Los Gatos, Cupertino, Rte 17 – NI6T
- San Francisco – N6BV
- Santa Cruz – Monterey – AE6RF
- W Bay, Silicon Valley – W6OAT
- S Bay, San Jose – AD6E
- Sierras North – K6III
- Sierras Central – ND6S
- Sierras South – WK6I
- Reno – K5RC
- Sonoma – K6SRZ

These RVC's are willing and able to help you with a variety of issues, including Contest Mentoring, RFI/TVI, Computer and Radio Interfacing, Antennas, RTTY, Noise, Logging Software, etc. Please contact them if you need help!

Which Contests Are Best For You?

What are your goals when operating in a contest? Capture some new DXCC entities? Complete your WAS award? Improve your own skills or scores? Experience the thrill of high run rates? Test out new additions to your station? Add to NCCC's team score? Just have Fun? Ed, W0YK, led a 5-star panel discussion to get at these very questions. Panel members Ken, N6RO; Bob, K6XX; and Andy, AE6Y discussed their favorite contests and provided practical advice on how to choose the best contests for your personal goals. If you missed the meeting, their presentations can be found on the NCCC website.

Pacificon 2008

This year NCCC will again have an exhibit booth in the main Exhibit Hall at Pacificon 2008. The meeting is a great opportunity to showcase NCCC's accomplishments, recruit new members, and connect with attendees. Last year we recruited 20 new NCCC members at the meeting. We'll also be there to support at least 8 Pacificon speakers who are also NCCC members: Jim, K9YC; Bill, N2RHV; Tom, N6BT; Dean, N6BV; Wayne, N6KR; Rick, N6RK; Bob, W6RGG; and Eric, WA6HHQ. We will again hand out information packets and souvenirs, and we'll have educational videos showing SO2R and RTTY. I'm still looking for volunteers for Booth Duty. If you would like to "sign up" for a couple of hours, just let me know via email at k6mm@arll.net. The dates are October 18 & 19 at the San Ramon Marriott.

NCCC Meeting – Truckee, CA -- August 23

Rick, N6XI hosted us at his fabulous QTH in Truckee. Attending this “bonus” meeting, which was more of a social gathering than a business meeting were Al, AD6E; John, K6AUC; Fred, K6DGW; Jerry, K6III; John, K6MM; Bob, K6NV; Barry, K6RM; Jim, K9YC; Jack, KF6T; Bob, KI6TRK; Rich, NU6T; Jack, W6NF; Bill, WB6JJ; and Jim, WX6V.

Many of these members make up the “Sierra Chapter” of NCCC. We were treated to a great BBQ lunch, demos of Rick’s K3-based SO2R station, and a video of the 2000 DXpedition to A52A.

We also succeeded in getting one attendee to become our 2008 Sweepstakes Guru (see K9YC’s column). By far, however, was the great opportunity to simply sit and brainstorm for several hours with our fellow KBers on topics ranging from antenna designs to contest strategies. What a great day – thanks again to Rick and his XYL, Ann, for hosting us!

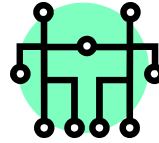
Summary

August was another great opportunity for *Contesting*, *Learning*, and *Schmoozing* with Club members around the Bay Area. I hope you were able to take advantage of it.

Looking ahead, CQP and ARRL Sweepstakes are just around the corner. Please use NCCC resources over these next few weeks to upgrade your stations, solve any technical problems, and test that new antenna, software, and rig. You’ll put yourself in a great position for good scores and much more fun in these contests. We’re counting on you!

CU in the next one!

73, John K6MM



Welcome Aboard!

Let’s all welcome these new members:
K6AAB, Steve Brunt -- Fresno, CA
K6EWN, Jon Schwartz -- Livermore, CA
KI6CRL, Kindness Israel -- San Jose, CA
WT6X, Jose Picazo -- Livermore, CA

N6ZM, Don Artru – Ripon, CA also rejoins as a Full member.

Contests for September

SSB, CW, VHF, UHF, Digital, QRP. It’s all there for September. For a one-page summary of all major contests throughout the year, go to www.nccc.cc and click on “Major Contest Calendar” at the top of the page.

September 2008

MI QRP Labor Day CW Sprint - Sep 2
All Asian DX Contest, Phone - Sep 7
Wake-Up! QRP Sprint - Sep 6
AGCW Straight Key Party - Sep 6
North American Sprint, CW - Sep 7
DARC 10-Meter Digital Contest - Sep 7
Tennessee QSO Party - Sep 8
WAE DX Contest, SSB - Sep 14
Swiss HTC QRP Sprint - Sep 13
SOC Marathon Sprint - Sep 13
North American Sprint, SSB - Sep 14
SARL VHF/UHF Contest - Sep 21
ARRL 10 GHz and Up Contest - Sep 21
Washington State Salmon Run - Sep 21
QRP Homebrewer Sprint - Sep 22
Run for the Bacon QRP Contest - Sep 22
CQ Worldwide DX Contest, RTTY - Sep 28
Texas QSO Party - Sep 28

Another QST Cover Plaque Winner!

By John, K6MM

NCCC member Jack Morgan, KF6T, won the July QST Cover Plaque Award for his article "Portable Two Element 15 Meter Yagi." Congratulations, Jack!

Earlier this year, Rob, K6RB, won the same award for his article, "The Joy Of Contesting" published in the January QST.

So – who will be our next Cover Plaque Winner?

Did You Know? – 17 Gavels

By John Miller, K6MM

- ◆ NCCC was won 17 Gavels in the ARRL November Sweepstakes Club Competition over the last 32 years
- ◆ NCCC won 6 consecutive Gavels from 1975-1980 and 5 consecutive Gavels from 2003-2007.
- ◆ This year, NCCC will be going for another "6-Peat".

Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
1975	1980	1995	2006	
1976	1984	1999	2007	
1977	1992	2003	2008	"6-Peat"
1978	1993	2004		
1979	1994	2005		

Did You Know? – WRTC 2010 Race

By John Miller, K6MM

Several KBers are continuing to work hard for a team slot at the World Radiosport Team Championships to be held in Russia in 2010. In the Western area, 4 NCCC members are in the Top 10:

WRTC Race	NA#4, W6, W7, KL7 CALL	TOTAL
1	K7RL	5793
2	K6XX	5507
3	N6MJ	5251
4	K6AM	4833
5	N6RO	4365
6	K6LA	4002
7	N7ZG	3948
8	N6TV	3716
9	K6AW	3528
10	KO7AA	3385

You can download all the rules for WRTC 2010 here:

<http://www.radiosport.net/WRTC%202010.doc>

VP/CC Corner

Jim Brown, K9YC

K6DGW to Lead 2008 Sweepstakes Challenge

I'm pleased to announce that Fred, K6DGW, has agreed to bring his leadership skills to the position of Sweepstakes Coordinator for 2008. Fred was my first choice, and thankfully he quickly accepted. Fred will need lots of help from all of us, both as operators, and as coordinating the efforts of other members.

Planning for Sweepstakes

N6BV and K9YC are quite certain that PVRC is working hard in preparation for the greatest challenge ever to our ownership of the Sweepstakes gavel. Last year, we heard lots of PVRC multi-op stations, where operators were being trained for future years. This year, we can expect each of those new operators to contribute substantial logs on their own.

Antenna Upgrades

Now is the time to work on improving antennas. A bigger signal can make any contest a lot more fun, and one great way to add a few dB is by improving the antenna system. On 40 and 80, every ten feet of height is good for another dB or two; going from a vertical to a dipole that's broadside to the east can add 3-6 dB; even going from RG58 to RG8 can add a dB or two, depending on the length of the line. Our antenna committee can help in three ways – 1) help you study your QTH and plan for upgrades; 2) help you design those upgrades; 3) help install those upgrades. Contact K6EU or your regional coordinator to get the process started.

Logging Program

Are you getting the most from your logging program? Every weekend contest is an opportunity to practice using it, and to learn new features. Are you having problems? Do you need help learning the software? Do you need a better program? Nearly 50 of our members have volunteered to help with logging software. No matter what software you use, there's plenty of help around. All you have to do is ask – your regional coordinator, or with a post on the NCCC reflector. In addition, the two most popular programs, Writelog and N1MM, have their own email reflectors where questions are quickly answered by expert users. Nearly everything that has ever bugged me about these programs was quickly fixed by advice I received from these reflectors. Sign up for the WriteLog reflector at contesting.com. For N1MM, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/> and sign up for N1MMLogger.

Computer Interfacing

If you need help with computer control of your radio, with computer keying or PTT, or with audio connections between your radio and your computer, check out <http://audiosystemsgroup.com/HamInterfacing.pdf> And feel free to ask for help on the reflector or from your Regional Coordinator. The simple wiring techniques in this pdf file provide high performance at minimal cost.

Mentoring and Guest Operating

Contact your Regional Coordinator if you want mentoring, or if you would like to operate at another member's station now or during Sweepstakes. It will be hard to find an operating seat at the last minute – no one wants to turn their station over to an unknown operator who doesn't know how to deal with antenna switching, antenna matching, or tuning the power amplifier. Now is the time to make those contacts, get trained on the host station, and get some practice. Every contest weekend should be viewed as an opportunity for this training and practice.

Preparing Your Station for a Guest Operator

This is other side of the coin! You know how your station works, but can you easily and logically explain it to a guest operator? A block diagram showing signal flow and how the major blocks are connected is a great start. So is clear and unambiguous labeling of all the switching. If your power amp and/or antenna tuners need to be tuned for each band, a neatly tabulated list of those settings, per band, will make things a lot easier (and can speed up band changes both for you and your guest operator).

Improve Switching for Band Changes

Think about how you might achieve faster band changes. Would a few switches help? An additional antenna tuner? An auto-tuner? Some of these measures cost a lot less than others. All can shave seconds from every band change, adding a dozen or so Q's to the total at the end of the contest.

Fix RFI Problems

Don't let fear of complaints from neighbors or the XYL keep you limit your operating time or keep your amplifier off the air. NCCC can help eliminate your RFI problems!

Kill or Reduce Local Noise

Chase down those local noise sources that make it hard to hear weaker (or even fairly strong) signals. Again, ask for help on the reflector or contact your Regional Coordinator. And study <http://audiosystemsgroup.com/RFI-Ham.pdf>

Upcoming Contests (Practice Opportunities)

Sept 6-7 – NA CW Sprint, All Asian DX SSB
Sept 13-14 NA SSB Sprint, WAE (Work All Europe)
Sept 27-28 CQWW RTTY DX We WON this last year!
Oct 4-5 **California QSO Party**
Every Thursday night, 7:30pm – 8 pm NCCC Sprint (CW)

Truckee Meeting Photos:





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