



NEXT NCCC MEETING

Monday, September 13th
The Old Spaghetti Factory
Jack London Square
MORE INFO INSIDE

October "Sierra Chapter" Meeting
planned for Reno, NV
Saturday Oct. 23
and you can *always* check:
<http://www.nccc.cc/meetings.html>

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September Contest Dates

North American Sprint, CW	Sep 5
All Asian DX, SSB	Sep 4-5
CCCC PSK31 Contest	Sep 4
IARU Region 1 Field Day, SSB	Sep 4- 5
ARRL September VHF QSO Party	Sep 11-13
North American Sprint, Phone	Sep 12
Bison Stampede (Indiana QP)	Sep 11- 12
WAE DX Contest, SSB	Sep 11-12
YLRL Howdy Days	Sep 17-19
Air Force Anniversary QSO Party	Sep 18-19
ARRL 10 GHz Cumulative	Sep 18-19
Washington State Salmon Run	Sep 18-19
Scandinavian Activity, CW	Sep 18-19
QCWA QSO Party	Sep 18-19
Tennessee QSO Party	Sep 19-20
CQ Worldwide DX, RTTY	Sep 25-26
Scandinavian Activity, SSB	Sep 25-26

October Contest Summary Date

California QSO Party	Oct 2-3
PSK31 Rumble	Oct 2
VK/ZL, Phone	Oct 2-3
RSGB 21/28 MHz, SSB	Oct 3
VK/ZL, CW	Oct 9-10
Pennsylvania QSO	Oct 9-10
FISTS Fall Sprint	Oct 9
Ibero-americano	Oct 9- 10
10-10 Day Sprint	Oct 10
JARTS WW RTTY	Oct 16-
17	
Worked All Germany	Oct 16- 17
Asia-Pacific Sprint, CW	Oct 17
RSGB 21/28 MHz, CW	Oct 17
Illinois QSO	Oct 17-18

Ruler Schuller

It's September....and that can only mean one thing: Contest Season approaches! We've got less than one month before the Fall contest season kicks off with a bang, in the form of CQP (otherwise known as the California QSO Party). What became the "Premier State QSO Party in the Nation" is, of course, sponsored by the Premier Contest Club - the NCCC!! I hope that everyone is getting ready to get on the air for this great contest - especially since it is our own! We want to make sure that all 58 counties are on the air. If you are going on a CQP County Expedition, be sure to let Bob, N6TV (our CQP "Secretary of the Interior") know. There is also a new award category for School Clubs (thanks to Dean, N6DE). If you want to help some budding testers, and have access to a college (or even high school) station, this is a great way to get their feet wet.

Our September meeting will be in Oakland at the Old Spaghetti Factory. The topic is (naturally) - CQP! We will have a stirring program by Bob, N6TV (the aforementioned Secretary of the Interior) and CQP Prime Minister Al, AD6E. A plethora of operating tips will be discussed to prepare everyone for the contest. If you know someone who has operated in the contest, but is not a member of the club, bring them along (so we can get them to join!). You might even learn some of the devious techniques Al has devised to score the logs! Check the web page for time and details, and be sure to give your reservations to Tony, AE0M.

The NCCC has the unique advantage of not only having a Club Call (K6ZM), but a station to go along with it. We have a great opportunity to create a contest training station, where we can teach new testers the skills and techniques needed to become top-notch competitors. I think that this could be a valuable resource for the club. There are some famous "contest universities" on the East Coast, and there is no reason that we can't do the same thing out here on the Left Coast. This station has the ability to be very competitive - this has the potential to be not only a great tool, but a great drawing card for new members.

Once CQP is out of the way, the next stop is (you guessed it!) Sweepstakes. Our own Contest Chairman, Bob, K6XX, is revamping the famous NCCC Sweepstakes Handbook. This valuable publication contains many tips and techniques that can help power you to a great score, and the club to a National Championship. There have been a few changes made to the exchange this year, so be sure to study the rules carefully. Also, make sure that your logging software can handle the new precedence exchange(s). Our goal is to get as many members as we can on and operating in both modes. The goal is not only to win as a club, but as individuals. There is a great sense of pride and accomplishment in beating personal goals. If we all set out to do our best on a personal level, the National award will fall right into our laps.

There has been a tremendous amount of discussion on the Contest Reflector about log checking, exchanges and the like. The endless discussions have almost taken on a life of their own. It appears to me, at least, that many of these folks have forgotten the basic concept of what this is all about - OPERATING. The fun and excitement comes from getting on the air and competing. My thrill comes from the competition.... I will play by whatever the rules are. Whether I think that they are "fair" or not doesn't matter... all participants in my category have to follow the same rules. I feel that my time is better spent honing my skills and improving my station. Just some food for thought!

We had a very interesting August meeting. My thanks to Eric, WA6HHQ, of Elecraft, for an excellent presentation. I also want to welcome our new members, KQ6OB, Fred, KC6SBJ, Lowell, AD6IC, Mike, and KF6RIP, Vic, who were elected to membership at the August meeting.

See you September 13 in Oakland!!

73, Ed, K6CTA



The 6Y2A team (Bob, N6TV, Tom, N6BT, Dean, N6BV, and Kenny, K2KW) gave a demonstration of

vertical antennas at the July joint NCCC/Mother Lode DXCC meeting in Jackson, CA. Here they seek a way to flood the surrounding area with salt water.

QSL BLUES?

I once heard a ham say “I wish I wouldn’t get so many QSL cards. They’re such a pain. Why does anybody want them?” Well, in filling requests for K6ZM confirmations, I have seen “I really need Contra Costa County for my County Hunter’s award” and “I need California” (REALLY!) but the most compelling answer to the question of “Why does anybody want them?” came on a two page letter which accompanied a QSL card. I won’t use the callsign, because I don’t have the writer’s permission to quote him, but I hope he won’t mind a few excerpts from his letter which should serve to answer the question being considered.

“Thank you for our recent QSO. I am retired from the U.S. Navy and have made the Philippines my home. The cost of living is less here, and my wife (who is from here) and I can live on my retirement income without a problem. I also have a small farm with coconuts, mangoes, and black pepper that makes a very little money, and 2 passenger Jeeps that make even less.

“This is my 40th year in Amateur Radio, and the magic of hearing my call coming back to me has never left! I operate under a temporary permit issued by the Philippine Government, which I must renew every year. The most important requirement to obtain a new permit is to show that I have used the last one! They want to see QSL cards from the stations I have worked. So you see, I really do have a USE for the QSL card which I hope you will send me!

“Thank you and if you send me a QSL you will have made an old man very happy!”

Now that’s a convincing request!

73, K6GT
K6ZM QSL manager

Speaking of which,

K6ZM AVAILABLE

The Northern California Contest Club call sign is K6ZM. However, unlike most clubs, the NCCC also has a club contest station available to members at 44 Toyon Terrace, in Danville. It is the former station of Phil Frazier, K6ZM, which is now maintained by his wife Peggy, W6AFI, and she has opened up the station

for NCCC members. The station is equipped to operate 160-10 meters. It has a four element 40 meter beam and five element monobanders for twenty through 10 meters.

The station is now managed by Stan, K6WG, (uk5maf@juno.com) and Al, NH7A (nh7a@arrl.net). Contact them to arrange operating time. Please do NOT just drop by. For the upcoming contest season, the station will be used to introduce newer members into contesting as well as being on for other members. CQP will be used as a training contest, and if you want to polish your skills or start to learn how to contest, contact Stan or Al to get the details.

73, Al, NH7A

DOUBLE CROSS

As the new school year begins and the solar flux continues rising, we enjoy the best radio conditions of the year during September. How are your antenna projects coming along? Got a low loop ready for 80m/75m Kbing during CQP and SS? How about that new 10m yagi? The clock is running...

Sprints

The first Saturday of September is the NCJ Sprint, with its team competition. Phone will occur the second Sunday 12 September. Are you registered on a team? Scott, W6CT, is now organizing teams for the CW event. That means the NCCC CW sprint teams will strive for First Place on September 4 (0000Z September 5). Even if you can’t commit to a team, please give our guys a Q.

Contest Results

Congratulations are due to Bruce, N6NT, for piloting ZF2NT over more than 2,500 others in the ARRL 10m contest. Furthermore, both Bruce and the NCCC team at HC8N are plaque-earners in February’s ARRL DX contest. The W6 (and even a few W7) results are full of NCCers as well. FB all!

Closer to home, an NCCC team entered the recent NAQP CW contest with the following results:

Call	QSO	Mult	Final
K5RC	857	213	182,541
K6ZM (WA6O op)	476	126	59,976
N6EE	377	123	46,371
K6CTA	370	116	42,920

I only received one other score: K6XX’s KCJ entry.

Call	QSO	Prfct	Final
K6XX	153Qs	72	11,016

Now that contest season is beginning, I expect you'll see more scores in future JUGs.

QRU CQP?

The California QSO Party is October 2-3. Will you be county expeditioning? Tell N6TV. Bob is (again) CQP County Coordinator, whose sworn duty is ensuring that all 58 counties are on the air during the contest. He's been successful the past several years due to superhuman effort; why not make his job a bit easier by contacting him first?

Sweepstakes

Since we've been unsuccessful in our SS gavelquest the past three years, I decided to take some time away from a paying job to help guarantee victory. The past month has been spent updating the SS Handbook and discussing strategy. The bottom line is well known, however. Winning requires that we get at least 150 logs (both modes combined). This is a simple, inescapable fact. You've marked your calendar for November 6-7 and November 20-21, right?

Regarding the SS Handbook, there are several things that require updating and I need your help. Please e-mail me your favorite operating trick for domestic contests. Describe the special hardware that keeps you competitive. Do you use WriteLog or NA? Tell us how those programs work in SS. Remember, the SS Handbook is circulated only to fellow NCCC'ers, so your "secrets" will be safe.

Do you need a SS station? Are you out of town during one of the big weekends? Let Tony, AE0M, know. Tony is reprising his WRTC '96 role as station coordinator. He'll match stationless operators with operatorless stations so the gavel will again be ours. I will also be organizing a telephone tree in October to rally as many NCCC'ers as possible. NCCC is capable of fielding about 400 entries in SS; we need 150... Can we count you in?

73 & C U
Bob, K6XX

NCCC REPEATER UPGRADE

I am now happy to report that W6OOL and I were at the repeater site a few weeks ago, while Peter engineered the installation of the new receiver.

This receiver is a GE MASTR II unit, which replaced a much older GE MASTR PRO unit. The entire repeater is now composed of MASTR II

components. It features about 6 dB more sensitivity, and slightly improved selectivity. Pete Grabosky, W6OOL, did a great service to the club by testing and tuning the receiver, and completing the installation. Without his help, it would never have been done. I hope the members who use the repeater will notice an improvement in performance.

Now, I'd like to get a new controller installed, some time! Thanks.

73, Bob Vallio - W6RGG

NCCC Heirloom

Among the WA6AHF estate items is the famous gin pole that he loaned to many of us over the years. Rather than sell this "WA6AHF Memorial Gin Pole" I will keep it here, at my place, and make it available to any of "the deserving" who can use it as needed.

It will have to be picked up and returned to me here in San Lorenzo (NO deliveries or pickups!) and I don't think anyone should keep it for more than two weeks at a time.

I can be contacted at my roster address/phone number or at: w6bsy@juno.com

tnx, vy 73.... Mac/w6bsy

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Place: Old Spaghetti Factory, Jack London Square, Oakland.

Menu: Chicken Parmesan (\$11) or Spaghetti with meat balls (\$10) including salad and dessert.

Program: 6PM, schmooze; 6:30PM Dinner; 7:30PM Meeting; "Making CQP a Roaring Success."

Parking: On the street or in the pay lot in front of the restaurant.

ARE YOUR DUES OVERDUE?

Look at your JUG mailing label. If your due date is highlighted in orange, then your dues are OVERDUE! Go to the last page, fill out the form, and mail it and your check to AE0M, now, so you don't forget it! If you don't renew NOW, you will become a "former member of the NCCC." Even more unthinkable, this is your last JUG!

Is CQP Really a Phone Contest?

Some Thoughts on CQP strategy

We've all heard it said that CQP is basically a phone contest, and certainly the winners sometimes have a relatively small number of CW contacts. However, I've run some numbers that suggest to me that more time could profitably be spent on CW.

Since in CQP phone contacts count for two points, and CW for three, it follows that your points per hour will be the same if your phone rate is 50% higher than your CW rate. For me, at least, that has not been possible.

I've modified my CQPWIN software so that version 7.0 (which should be downloadable now from the www.cqp.org site) keeps track in real time, and also post-contest, of QSO's and points per hour for each band-mode separately. I've looked at my logs for 1994-1998, and have also looked at W0YK's logs for '97 and '98. (The log statistics are summarized in the table on page 7 - See "CQP LOG ANALYSIS...")

There are a couple of simple conclusions to be drawn:

- (a) My CW rate is consistently higher than my phone rate in terms of points per hour. I could improve my score by doing better on phone and/or spending more time on CW.
- (b) My imbalance was especially strong on low power. Since I finished first and second anyway, this suggests that other low power operators should use CW also.
- (c) Ed's rate for 98 is more balanced. He averaged 102 QSO's per hour on phone and 65 on CW. He could probably help his score by bringing up his CW rate (his rate was 65 QSO's per hour to my 72) or spending less time on CW.
- (d) I should work on improving my phone rate. Ed averaged a humbling (for me) 17 QSO's per hour more than I last year. I noticed in the contest that he has a much higher energy level in his phone CQ'ing, and talks faster in the contest. I always had assumed that this approach was counterproductive in CQP, but apparently not.

My observation of the winner's scores are that in time of good propagation, the ratio of CW contacts goes down. For example, in 1994, I had the most QSO's in the contest, but lost out to AB6FO (now K6LA), who had 50% CW contacts. In 1994, 95, and 96, the winner had 50%, 47% and 49% CW contacts, while in

better conditions, the winners in 1997 and 98 had 31% and 32% CW contacts.

So, what to do for 1999? Well, I intend to be operating from the club station of the Yukon ARS as a multi with Bob, AA6VB, so this analysis may not influence our operation. However, my suggestion for the normal run of good but not winning stations and operators is: PUT MORE EFFORT INTO CW. Monitor the rates in real time and remember, even though the QSO rate will be lower, you will maximize points by staying on CW until the CW rate drops below 67% of the phone rate.

Good luck, and listen for us from VY1-land!

73, Andy Faber, AE6Y

HOW I INSTALLED A NEW CRANK-UP TOWER: A photo story (Part 2)

You remember, in the last episode, we finished with a shot of a gorgeous chunk of concrete, with three huge steel plates with holes extending upward. Part two consisted of three phases.

But before I could even begin, I assembled a group of hams who couldn't come up with an excuse quickly enough, and asked them to come over to help tilt my tower up.

I was delighted when a group of young (?) healthy (?) helpers arrived on Saturday morning.

Phase I) We moved the tower from the side yard around to the back yard by pushing it along on a piano dolly. This was an easy job with a suitable number of helpers! We aligned the bottom of the tower with the aforementioned beautiful concrete structure. We bolted the tower to the base and connected the cable from the raising fixture on loan from Al, AD6E. (Al wasn't there: he wisely got out of town immediately after lending me the fixture!)

Phase II) We then tilted the tower up with very little trouble! One man turned the winch handle on the raising fixture; the other four lifted (standing alongside, not under, the tower) as much as possible to aid the man on the crank.

When the tower was upright, we bolted it firmly into position. In fact, the most difficult part of the operation was aligning the bolt holes, but even that was

very little trouble for my worthy team of experts, whose motto was "Get a longer lever and pry harder."



The tower is now pointed in the proper direction! The bolt holes were aligned and the bolts inserted and torqued to specifications. (Note the old tower, growing out of the sweet-smelling jasmine, and up through the eaves of the house.)



The crew responsible for the safe and efficient raising of the tower comprises: Tim (non-ham son of K6GT), Bruce (N6NT), George (K6GT), Dave (N6NZ), Bob (K6XX), and in front, Lisa and Sarah, (the lovely and delightful daughters of K6XX. These girls are often seen in supervisory roles at NCCC activities, in the company of their dad.)

Phase III) Pat, my XYL, brought out the sandwiches and beer to reward the troops. This was the easiest part of the whole operation!

The really important thing, even more important than having the tower up and ready to receive the C4SXL antenna from the old tower, was that the whole project was done very safely, without so much as a bloodied knuckle.

Next month look for Part 3, the antenna transfer!

vy 73, K6GT

Is Rag-Chewing the Ham Norm?

(Reprinted with the author's permission...ed.)

I have often been struck by how in the USA we automatically assume that rag chewing is the normal on-the-air activity of hams. We contesters are made to feel guilty when we fill the bands with our activities on weekends, as though even this temporary interruption of the "normal" activities on the bands -- mostly rag chewing -- is barely tolerable and not really politically correct.

At the same time I hear the complaints about how ham radio growth has come to a halt in this country and I hear concerns that our hobby will soon die on the vine for lack of new recruits.

As a contester geographically blessed with a good location from which to work Europe, I have been impressed by the growth of contest activity in that continent. My logs show it: the number of Europeans to be worked increased year by year, even with declining conditions. It seems that the new hams in Europe enjoy competitive operating activities in greater numbers than our own new recruits over here.

During the recent sunspot minimum I was especially thankful to the Italian and Spanish hams for keeping things interesting under even the worst conditions. It seemed that, especially in SSB contests, there was almost a limitless supply of EA's and I's waiting to give out contest points to those of us able to put a consistent signal into those areas.

I have been getting the magazine of the ARRL's sister society URE in Spain, "Radioaficionados". I have noticed that the proportion of pages devoted to operating activities in that magazine seems to be much greater than what we find in "QST." I know the ARRL supports contesting and even publishes "NCJ" -- though I get the idea that some ARRL Directors prefer not to bring up the subject of ARRL's support for contesting in polite company -- but here I'm talking about the Spanish equivalent of "QST", which goes to all

members of the society, including rag chewers. So I took their May 1999 issue and did a page count.

The magazine has many fewer pages than "QST" They had 68 including the covers, which they count. Here is what I found when I tabulated the number of pages devoted to different subjects:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Number of Pages</u>
Contests, Awards and Special Events	30
Technical and Construction	8
Advertising	6
Society Administrative Matters	6
DX	5
Local Club News	3
Want Ads	3
Space	2
Photos & other	5

In summary, the magazine seems to encourage participation in fun operating events by giving such events preferential space. Can this be contributing to

the fact that there is such a great supply of EA's in the contests, especially on SSB?

Is it any wonder that our kids might be turned off by the image that we seem to hold up as the "most normal" of Amateur Radio activities, that of one old geezer rag chewing with another?

I know I'm preaching to the choir here, but I for one am proud of my contest activities and don't believe that I need apologize to anyone or in any way feel guilty about them. I believe that what I am doing provides a far more attractive image for youth than does rag chewing.

I am a great admirer of those of our fellow Amateurs who are engaged primarily in preparations for emergency communications, but outside of that I don't feel that there is any segment of our hobby that contributes more to the state of the art than testers, and I'm proud to say so to anyone!

73, Fred, K3ZO

CQP LOG ANALYSIS BY AE6Y

<u>Log</u>	<u>Hours (PH/CW)</u>	<u>Points/Hr (PH/CW)</u>	<u>Place in State</u>
AE6Y 94	14:09/9:01	158/190	2 High Pwr
AE6Y 95	10:51/11:20	112/159	2 Low Pwr
AE6Y 96	11:15/12:22	113/160	1 Low Pwr
W0YK 97	10:02/9:09	193/161	16 High Pwr
AE6Y 98	12:09/10:10	170/217	5 High Pwr
W0YK 98	13:49/10:08	205/194	2 High Pwr

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I'd like to get my JUG at the NCCC website each month, and donate the savings to the general fund!

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