Publication of the Northern California Contest Club (no. 344) January 2001

JUG

MEETING:

DATE: Monday, January 8,
Agilent Santa Clara
(formerly HP Santa Clara)
Building 50
6:00 PM
INFO & DIRECTIONS INSIDE
and you can *always* check:
http://www.nccc.cc/meetings.html

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

January Contests Dates

ARRL RTTY Roundup	Jan 6 – 7
Kid's Day Contest	1800Z-2400Z, Jan 6
Japan Int. DX Contest, 160-40m	Jan 12 -14
Midwinter Contest, CW	Jan 13
North American QSO Party, CW	Jan 13 -14
NRAU-Baltic Contest, CW	Jan 14
NRAU-Baltic Contest, SSB	Jan 14
Midwinter Contest, Phone	Jan 14
LZ Open Contest, CW	Jan 20
North American QSO Party, SSB	Jan 20 - 21
ARRL VHF Sweepstakes	Jan 20 - 22
CQ 160-Meter Contest, CW	Jan 26 - 28
REF Contest, CW	Jan 27 - 28
BARTG RTTY Sprint	Jan 27 - 28
UBA Contest, Phone	Jan 27 - 28
Kansas QSO Party	Jan 27 - 28
ARRL January VHF Sweepstakes	Jan 29

February Contests Dates

Vermont & New Hampshire QSO Parties	Feb 3 – 4
10-10 Int. Winter Contest, SSB	Feb 3 - 4
Minnesota QSO Party	Feb 3
Delaware QSO Party	Feb 3 – 5
North American Sprint, Phone	Feb 4
Asia-Pacific Sprint, CW	Feb 10
North American Sprint, CW	Feb 11
ARRL International DX Contest, CW	Feb 17 – 18

For a complete calendar, log submission details, and due dates for logs, visit:

http://www.hornucopia.com/contestcal/index.htm

ALL THAT JAZZ!

Happy New Year to you all. It was an active and enjoyable year for me – I hope it was for you. The big SS campaign is behind us, the club competition results are in the hands of the log-checkers. Again, thanks to all club members who got on for SS and sent in their logs, K6XX and the rest of the BoD, W0YK & K6GT, for their support in what looks like another win for NCCC. A true team effort.

In "the recent scores" listings you'll find club members' reported scores for the ARRL 160m and 10m contests. Final listing of scores for SS and CQWW are listed on the NCCC web site, and includes scores reported after last month's JUG deadline.

After a short pause in the winter season, some of us have just done our thing in the RAC, STEW PERRY, and INTERNET SPRINT, on the New Year's weekend. Next up, from the club point of view, is the NAQP, in which we have done very well in recent years with our five-man teams. I will be organizing the teams on the NCCC reflector, starting on Jan. 3, hoping to field several teams on each mode. If you are not active on email, call me on the land line to let me know of your interest in joining a team for CW NAQP, on Jan 13, or SSB on Jan 20. Both are 100w max., 6 band, mults/Qs count on each band, etc. Great 2 Radio practice, in fact, it's necessary, if you want to get into the top rankings.

Coinciding with the CW NAQP on the second weekend of Jan. is the JIDX Low Band Contest. If you are in the marathon mode, you can do both seriously, if you have the endurance to contest for about 30 hours straight. JIDX is a good exercise to check out your 160/80/40m antennas and copying through the noise on 80/160m (arrghh!). Speaking of 160, the CQWW160 comes up on the last weekend of January – Top Band should still be in good shape then.

Our next club competition will be in the CQ WW WPX contest in March and May. Start thinking about your plans, we'll start some hype on the reflector in a while, but it won't be as intense as the SS effort. Again, have a great contesting year in 2001. KB,

73, Ken, N6RO, VP/CC

DOUBLE CROSS

Happy New Millennium!

Happy New Year/new millennium greetings to all NCCC'ers. Our successful year 2000 gives us reason for optimism and expectations of success in this new year. Sunspots may have peaked in 2000, but will still be plentiful throughout 2001, enabling outstanding high band conditions. All in all, 2001 promises great opportunities for HF operators in general and NCCC in particular.

I'd like to extend my thanks and gratitude to all that contributed to NCCC's success in 2000, especially our VP/CC Ken, N6RO, whose Sweepstakes effort and leadership produced the best NCCC club score in 25 years, and undoubtedly the best score ever after log checking. Thank you, Ken!

January Meeting

Can you improve your signal to noise ratio by improving your grounding system? How do you optimize your grounding on a small lot? What is involved in designing a no-holds-barred ground system? Internationally recognized expert in grounding, Richard Dickey Ph.D., W6RKA, will answer all your practical and theoretical questions January 8 at Agilent Santa Clara. Professor Dickey will be ably assisted by Jack, N6EM. Arrive around 6:00, pizza at 6:30, and program at 7:30.

Now What?

With the fall contest season behind us, we now must decide which team contest we'll select for the spring. There hasn't been much discussion on the reflector yet — let's fix that! WPX is our usual selection (and we have the OH challenge encouraging this option,) but ARRL DX is another good possibility. What say? Announce your preference on the reflector.

73 de Bob, K6XX

"Brag" Submitted

In the Fortieth All - Asia DX Contest, first place in North America, CW, Multi-Op, Multi-Band, goes to (*may we have the envelope, please?… ed*) K6iii !

Now how's that for a modest station?!

Life on the Beach

It was a normal day today here on Little Cayman (pop. 100, at the very end of the road.) I woke up about 3 a.m. and decided to go see who was on the air. But first I had to go fish my paddle out of the pot on the stove, where I had left it to soak overnight in a pot full of Limeaway. I had tried all day yesterday, on and off, to get the contacts to work reliably. Nothing I tried would work, so I began to employ desperate measures. When I tried the paddle out after the soak, though, it sounded promising. At least, it sure looked a whole lot nicer after soaking all the greenish grunge off it.

So then I went to 20m and began to swing the beam around to Europe from where I had left it pointing at ZL the last time I used it… only the beam wouldn't swing. The indicator just remained stuck on SW. Again. I've been down this road before. The rotator was a brand new Tailtwister when I put it up a little over a year ago. When I returned this fall, it looked like it had aged 20 years. I had to take the rotator down anyway, since I was adding some tower sections last month. I had N7MQ and NV7J down here from Oregon for CQWW-SSB, and after the contest they volunteered to be my ground crew while I built up the tower a bit more. I sent down the rotator on a rope and N7MQ grabbed it. Mark already knew the plan was to put a pigtail on it, so he headed off to the workbench as soon as the rotator reached the ground. A couple of hours later I came down and got a chance to take a better look at it. Mark had tried to loosen the screws on the terminal strip, but instead of loosening they had just broken off in the sockets. That terminal strip looked like it had been at the bottom of the ocean since the Titanic went down. "Gonna take some major surgery on that one," he said. His flight home left the next day.

A week later, I finally went to perform that "major surgery." I had a spare backup rotator—an old HamIV that W6OAT let me have a few years ago. So I cannibalized the backup rotator for its terminal strip, and after about 6 hours of tedious rotator repair was ready to run the rotator back up the tower. It worked great—for about 5 days. Then it quit turning, and checks of resistances from the ground showed I had a couple of leads that weren't making good contact. So up the tower I went, and an hour later came down with the rotator, again. This time I soldered the pigtail leads on the inside of the terminal strip, keeping the 8 screw lugs just to use for test harnesses. Back up went the rotator. It worked very well… for about a week. Then it quit turning. Checking ground resistances, I could tell one of the limit switches was not making good contact. Up I went, and an hour later came down with the rotator. I carefully cleaned both limit switches, and back up the tower it went. That was about a week ago. Ground resistance checks now show that pin 6 is open. Hmmm… that's the left limit switch on a Tailtwister. Oh well… it looks like there's some more rotator repair in my future.

Now if you've ever opened up a rotator, you've probably been greeted with numerous ball bearings bouncing out and around on the floor as soon as you pull the case off. Once you get it all apart, you wonder how you will ever going get the thing back together again. I was like that once, back when I lived in California full time. That's the land of low humidity, moderate temperatures, no salt in the air… a place where rust and corrosion are almost unknown. But since coming to Little Cayman, I've been through this drill on rotators so many times that now I think I can strip one and then reassemble it while blindfolded.

It's not so bad, really. At least the radio is working. I still can't get the paddle to work reliably, but I can hear fine. Well, I did have to repair the headphones a few times — like about a dozen. The last pass was when the rats invaded my house and a rat chewed through the headphone cord. And, if I can ever get the paddle working, at least the amp is working. That did take the better part of last week. I found there were three successive connectors in the low voltage section which had been arcing badly after corrosion had built up on the connector contacts. The net result of it all was that I wasn't getting any filament voltage. But, as I said, I just got the amp fixed day before yesterday. That was the day the paddle quit working on me. And after screwing with the paddle for a full day, that was when the rotator quit working. And it's STILL not working.

As I said, it was a normal day here on Little Cayman. With luck, though, I will have a day sometime next January when everything will be working at once. Then maybe I'll have a QSO! And you know what everybody in the US always says, once they get through telling me how rotten the weather is

back home? “Go have a pina colada for me.” Right! Just as soon as I get the rotator fixed. Oh yes, and those EHS guys I put up just one year ago are already rusting out. Time to replace them with Phillystran, I suppose.

So, Friends, the moral of this little story is the following. ANYBODY can go to a little Caribbean island and set up for a contest, field day style. That’s no big deal. But just try to keep a station working down here. Impossible!

Bruce, N6NT/ZF2NT

Scores: 2000 ARRL 160 meter

Call	Class	QSO's	Sections	Countries	Score
N6RO	SOHPUA	596	62	6	88,808
N6BT*	SOHPUA	300	53	3	34,104
K7NV	SOHPUA	225	56	0	25,200
K6TA	SOHPUA	216	43	3	20,286
K6RB	SOHPUA	239	41	1	20,202
W6EU	SOHPUA	188	41	1	15,918
W0YK	SOHPUA	175	44	0	15,400
N6ZFO	SOLPUA	169	39	1	13,640
K6CTA	SOHPUA	170	36	1	12,691
W6IXP	SOHPUA	170	35	1	12,348
W6ISO	SOLPUA	124	24	1	6,275
KF6RIP	SOHPUA	72	22	0	3,168
K6SRZ	SOLPUA	43	19	0	1,634
K6EP	SOHPUA	29	15	0	870
K6III	SOQRPUA	35	12	0	840
K6GT	SOHPUA				0
W6YX	SOHPUA				0
					271,384

* estimate by webmaster

SCORES: 2000 ARRL 10 meter

Call	Class	QSO's		US/VE		Countries		Score
		CW	Phone	CW	Phone	CW	Phone	
K5RC	SOHPMIXAS	1102	963	60	58	56	17	1,210,558
KA6BIM	SOHPMIXUA	427	1424	57	58	48	55	999,312
K2KW (K6KM)	SOHPCWUA	1728		61		70		907,568
K6RB	SOHPMIXUA	909	826	57	56	41	17	904,428
K3EST (@N6RO)	SOHPPHUA		2968		62		74	807,296
KS6H	SOHPMIXUA	313	1425	50	58	38	39	758,870
K7NV	SOHPCWUA	1557		60		57		727,740
K6IF (@N6NF)	SOHPPHUA		2847		61		66	723,138
NT6K	SOHPMIXUA	657	505	55	54	30	30	616,850
K7BV/VY1 (@VY1JA)	SOHPCWUA	1404		60		33		521,916
N6ZB	SOHPCWUA	1008		57		52		441,668
K6XX	SOQRPMIXUA	516	219	56	45	33	17	379,614
N6EM	SOLPMIXUA	395	323	53	52	34	29	375,984
N6ZFO	SOLPMIXUA	481	208	55	44	26	7	308,880
K6GT	SOHPMIXUA	368	387	37	51	19	34	254,748
W6IXP	SOHPMIXUA	158	726	38	52	10	19	248,472
AD6E	SOHPCWUA	605		57		34		220,584
KF6A	SOHPPHUA		942		58		47	197,820
K6III	SOQRPMIXUA	310	11	52	1	22	1	91,520
AD6G	SOLPCWUA	276		47		24		78,384
K6CTA	SOHPCWUA	128		43		14		29,184
W6OAT	SOHPCWUA	93		17		27		16,368
N2ALE	SOLPPHUA		152		40		7	14,288
W6ISO	SOLPCWUA	36		19		1		2,880
Total								10,838,070

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