

JUG

Publication of the
Northern California
Contest Club



November
2009
Issue 450

NCCC Net
Thursday 8 PM
3610+/-

NEXT MEETING

"Mid-Sweepstakes Checkpoint" (Fred, K6DGW)
"Tall Towers" (Bob, W1RH)

Date: Monday, 16 November 2009

Time: 6pm schmooz, 6:30pm dinner, 7pm program

Location: China Wok Restaurant, 512 Sacramento Street,
Vallejo, CA 94590 (707) 645-2008

Dinner will be the Chinese Buffet including soft drink (soda,
tea, or lemonade), tax and tip for **\$20**.

Please RSVP to W6FB no later than Friday evening,
November 13, 2009.

You can pay in advance via PayPal: paypal@nccc.cc
You can also pay cash at the door.



NCCC Officers

President: [Jack Morgan, KF6T](mailto:Jack.Morgan@KF6T)

Vice-President and Contest Chairman: [Fred Jensen, K6DGW](mailto:Fred.Jensen@K6DGW)

Secretary/Treasurer: [Jack Brindle, W6FB](mailto:Jack.Brinkle@W6FB)

Directors

Past President: [John Miller, K6MM](mailto:John.Miller@K6MM)

Director: [Chris Tate, N6WM](mailto:Chris.Tate@N6WM)

Director: [Garry Shapiro, NI6T](mailto:Garry.Shapiro@NI6T)

Director: [Kevin Rowett, K6TD](mailto:Kevin.Rowett@K6TD)

Honorary Director: Rusty Epps, W6OAT

Webmaster: John Miller, [John Miller, K6MM](mailto:John.Miller@K6MM)

JUG Editor: Rob Brownstein, k6rb@baymoon.com



Inland View

By Jack Morgan, KF6T

CQ SS!

SS is just around the corner and I have a feeling that the Club is going to do really well this year. We presented a SS 101 online webinar last night and it was very well attended – standing room only! This webinar will be available on the NCCC website (click Webinars) if you missed it. Our next webinar will be in December and will delve into the world of RTTY contesting.

We will have four SS practice sessions for you to shake out the cobwebs and discover software/hardware problems. These will be on the two nights preceding each SS mode – the CW practice will be on Nov 5th and 6th at 7:30 pm and SSB practice will be on Nov 19th and 20th at 7:30pm.

Download the latest versions of your logging software and test them out. While you are at it, update your Super Check Partial master.dta file to one that is specific

to the SS contest (US and Canadian listings only). This will reduce the DX clutter in the super check call window during the contest. This applies to the N1MM and WriteLog programs.

Go to <http://www.SuperCheckPartial.com> and download their zipped master files collection. Extract the masterSS.dta file and change its name to master.dta. Transfer this file (overwrite) the master.dta file in your contest program folder. After the SS contests are over, replace this SS specific file with the new unzipped master.dta file to include DX calls.

China Wok – New Meeting Date

Our November NCCC meeting at the China Wok in Vallejo has been moved to Monday, November 16th. This will give you a week to recover from CW SS and give Fred, K6DGW a chance to come up with some preliminary results for us. Also, Bob Hess, W1RH will be giving a very interesting talk about some really “Tall Towers” for you to dream about. BTW, the China Wok food is top notch!

Holiday Dinner Party

Our annual Holiday Party will take place at Michael’s Restaurant in Mountain View on Monday, December 14th. We already have some great entertainment lined up but we are still looking for more. If you have any hidden (well, not too hidden) talents you would like to share that evening, let us know! We will put the spotlight on you.

Also, start rounding up some of your unused gear (radio and PC) and donate it to the NCCC auction effort. That is always a lot of fun the night of the party and it helps the Club’s finances.

VP/CC

By: Fred Jensen, K6DGW

OK, I don’t know about the rest of you, but for me, the winter contest season starts with CQP, which I really look forward to.

N6A this year provided all the adventure it usually does, and just about as much as I can handle at my age ☺ We never know what the weather at 8,400’ in Alpine County will bring, so each year is a crap shoot. I set my aircraft altimeter to 8,400’ [regardless of what it reads, it’s old and uncalibrated] when I get there on Wednesday. Thereafter, it’s our barometer. Wed was “Set Up Camp” day, and go to bed early because the temperature had the glide angle of a brick as soon as the sun sank beyond the hills to the west.

We got the antennas up on Thursday, still cold, barometer was falling, Friday is our “test the gear” and general goof off day [we males are good at that]. Lots of wind on Fri, snow that night, more snow on Sat, lost Larry’s Pro II on Sat night to precip static, went to Don’s Pro II and lost it Sun to accumulated precip static, and finished with John’s IC-706.



We’ve had worse years, most of the snow was gone when we left Sunday at 1630, and we’re not sure how much longer we can push fate and keep this up given our advancing ages, but I sure do enjoy it each year.

This year, we had a microwave, a toaster, coffee maker, Larry’s 10 GigaBTU three-burner stove, and a heated latrine seat [so neat!]. Jimmy couldn’t come so we didn’t

have the espresso machine, but we did have our electric blankets, Larry's EU3000 idling away through the night, and I made the coffee really strong. Sort of espresso, it is camping after all. Hey, survival can be tough, but you can make the best of it.

Sweepstakes is upon us. We need everyone's scores ... "No score is too small, no log is insignificant." If you need a station, let me know right now ... 530.885.8251.

Likewise if you have a station open for one or both days. Open call signs will be welcome too. The Sweepstakes 101 webinar was full, and hugely informative, thanks to KF6T, N6DE, K6MM. These things do seem to be gaining in popularity *and* effectiveness.

RTTY Round-Up is [gasp!] 2 Jan, second day into 2010. We're planning a webinar [or maybe two, depending on interest] about the intricacies of RTTY, and how to get into this growing mode for NCCC. Trust me, I'm a newbie [2 yrs], I've found that it's fun, and it is really easy to get started.

Now, if you want to do what our Champion In Residence, Ed W0YK, does, that's a little bit more complicated, but I'm sure he'll divulge his secrets too. Just be prepared to take notes ☺

This is a contest growing in popularity in NCCC, due mainly to Ed's promotion, education of all of us, and his enthusiasm. Stay tuned, we'll have more soon on the reflector. Last year's romp was a huge fun event for me, and I'm really looking forward to this one.

Please ALL – remember! Log submittals for SS, both modes, are due in **15** days from the contest. That's very quick compared to what we've been used to. If you need help, email me right away. Let us help you, we want your points!

73 and KB

Dues

Have you paid your dues for the year? It's still just \$24 (cheap), with students just \$12 (even cheaper) and family members \$12 (what a deal).

Contact [Jack Brindle, W6FB](#)

We can get your dues via PayPal or snail mail or via cash at the next meeting.

November Webinar Recordings:

Did you miss K6MM's 160m antenna webinar last month? Here's a repeat... this time as a joint webinar between NCCC and PVRC.

Please sign up for this webinar at:
<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/225094099>

Looking for a good 160m antenna that will fit on a city lot without a tall tower? See the full presentation behind John K6MM's award winning article in the June 2009 QST, including detailed antenna construction steps and photos. Get your station ready on 160m for Stew Perry, NAQP, and the winter ARRL & CQ 160m contests!

Presenter: John Miller, K6MM
Topic: A 160M Helically Wound Vertical -- Beam Me Up Scotty - No Excuses!
Date: Wednesday, October 14, 6:00pm-7:30pm PDT

How to attend this webinar:

We will be using PVRC's webinar system, which is different from the system we've been using in the NCCC.

Step 1:
You need to register to attend this webinar

at:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/225094099>

Step 2:

Read the quick start guide at:

http://www.pvrc.org/webinar/quick_ref.pdf

Step 3:

You'll need:

- 1) Your web browser to view the presentation
 - 2) Your speakers or headphones plugged into your sound card to hear the audio. If you plan to ask a question, you'll need to also plug a mic into your sound card. You cannot call in to this webinar by telephone.
- 73...

-Dean - N6DE

A History of ARRL Sweepstakes

By: Rob Brownstein, K6RB

For those of us who won brooms last year (I snagged two), the little medallion says 75th Sweepstakes. That would imply the contest began in 1934, but it didn't. It began in 1929 and was suspended during the war years.

With some paraphrasing, the December QST described the upcoming contest as follows:

It was described as the first National Relay Contest, open to all 68 sections throughout the USA, Canada and including Hawaii, Alaska, V.I., Porto Rico (sic), Cuba, etc.

Participants would exchange one message, each way, with a station for credit, but were permitted to exchange messages with as many stations as possible.

Messages had to be transmitted in complete form including city of origin, station of origin, number, date, address, text, and signature. In addition, the text had to consist of at least 10 words. A sent message counted 1 point, a received message counted 1 point, so a successful exchange counted 2 points

for each station. Then, the total points were multiplied by the number of different sections worked (up to 68).

Although it didn't explicitly say you could work a station only once regardless of band, the rules stating that you could only exchange a single message with a station amounted to the same thing.

At the time, there were only three top prizes for the top three scores. In addition, there were lithographed certificates for the winners in each of the 68 sections.

The contest was done over two weekends, and there was no mention of different modes or power levels.

The first three SS winners were W1ADW, W9DEX and W2BAI. W1ADW was also the first SS contestant to win a "clean sweep." And the term was coined with that first contest.

W1ADW achieved a score of 13,158 using a Hi-C Hartley, and 852 for part of the time, and a UV-203-A for the remainder. There's no mention of antennas, but he did log exchanges on 80, 40 and 20 meters.

W9DEX got 12,212 points in 43 sections with 153 exchanges, using a Type 10 on just 80 and 20.

Third-place winner, W2BAI, got 12,090 points having worked 155 stations in 39 sections. He focused on 40 and 20 meters.

It's interesting to note that what was considered to be the biggest problem was "educating of other amateurs in the whys and wherefores of the contest." Practically every contestant who commented said it was "tough sledding" getting messages out of most stations.

There was also some confusion about whether one had to be "in the contest" to participate; or be a member of ARRL. There was also confusion about how to submit

results. Some participants thought all QSOs had to be reported using standard message forms, etc.

Although there were no separate power categories, people did report their set ups, and there was very little difference between the scores of those running power versus those using B-batteries and relatively low power. According to QST “the high- and low-power stations ran neck and neck in this contest.”

All participants used 80, 40 and/or 20 meters (sounds like SS 2008!). Out of the 90 stations who reported their totals, 22 worked both 40 and 20; 22 worked on 40 only; 17 operated on all three bands; 15 used 80 and 40; and 6 operated only 80. Four of those reporting operated 80 and 20; and 4 stuck with 20 m.

Another first was the first disqualification. Poor old W7AC, who had amassed 1680 points, had failed to record the times for the exchanges. So, his log was disqualified.

The winners in most sections were “well-known traffic men,” and said QST, many were league officials. (Now, that’s a difference we can all relate to).

Here, in Santa Clara Valley section, the results were: W6YU (1,044), W6BYH (936) and W6DQH (48). In SF section, W6WB had 1,426.

Five Years Later

Although the exchange sequence and information remained the same, for the first time the contest has A, B and C class (for under 25 watts, between 25 and 75 watts, and over 75 watts). Unlike today’s SS, you had a power factor (3x for A, 2x for B, and 1x for C), and you could have more than one power class during the contest. So, you had to keep track of the QSOs in each power category, and apply the appropriate power factor.

Amazingly, in just five years, the number of participants reporting increased from 90 to over 920! I guess it’s fair to call that a “tipping point.”

Scores had also increased dramatically. From a first-place score of just over 13,000 in 1929, the first place in 1934 had 113,679 (W9HKC). He beat out W4BRG’s 113,360. The winner had made 377 Qs in 51 sections and the runner-up 443 in 65 sections. The difference had to do with power factors. W9HKC used 17.1 watts on 40 and 21 watts on 80; W4BRG was class B (30 to 45 watts) on 80, 40 and 20.

The most popular band was 40 (76.3 percent used it). Next most popular was 80 (63.2 percent); and 20 had 35.4 percent. Less than three percent used top band (some things never change), and less than 2 percent used 6 meters.

Again, there was no mode distinction but it was noted that W9GAF’s 149 contacts were made on 75 meter phone.

Here’s where the club competition came into play, too. The highest scoring participants in ARRL-affiliated clubs (where three or more took part and submitted scores) were each given an award. Club aggregate scores, though, were not yet taken into account. So, it would have been too soon for NCCC to win the gavel.

In SCV, W6HJT had 34,892 points, 61 sections, and operated in C class. W6BIP (our own “Bip”) came in second in the SF section with 71,552 points, 64 sections, operating both B and C class.

As members of ARRL, we have access to their QST archives. That’s where most of this information came from. The SS has been around a long time. It has grown from 68 sections to 80, and the two-weekend period has been broken up into separate weekends for CW and phone modes. The exchange format has undergone significant modification over the years, and the old 1

point for sending a message, and 1 point for receiving a message has also been changed. It would have been possible, then, to send an exchange to someone, get an "R," and receive 1 point even if the other ham did not send his own message.

One of the oldest contests is ARRL DX contest. I'm going to do some research into that one and have a similar history for an upcoming JUG.

Points to Ponder During SS CW and Phone

By: Rob Brownstein, K6RB

It is tempting to chase after rare sections as soon as they get spotted, but don't give up a good run frequency to do it. You will probably have less pile up to fight if you wait a while then find them.

You are going to need to get as many Qs as you can, ultimately. Some of the S&P ops spend a few hours, playing, then, they are never heard again. You have your best chance of working those guys by running early on.

If you are A class with wire antennas, you should still spend at least half your time CQing on a clear run frequency (higher in the band, if need be).

Most likely 15 m will be open at the outset, but if you start out there, you may forego a decent run frequency on 20 m. Remember, you work someone once, period, so the only reason to start on 15 is if you believe you'll have better rate on that band at the time.

Check 40 later in the afternoon, even with daylight still strong. Getting to 40 earlier may provide you with higher rate and an open run frequency. Getting there too late means you'll be S&Ping until you find an open spot.

Use 80 m to fill in your close-in sections. You should be darn close to a sweep by the time you take your 6-hour snooze (at 1 AM). If you're missing any close-in sections, get back on early on 80 and try to find them.

If you do 12 hours, then 6 hours of sleep, then 12 hours, your start at 7 AM could be 40 meters as 20 meters may not be ready, yet.

The afternoon doldrums are part of the SS experience. Don't despair; just persevere. If you have not got your sweep by 4 PM Sunday, watch the spots (if you're U class) and try to nail it.

If you have your sweep early, spend the rest of your time optimizing rate.

Have fun.



Nov 1, 2009 – bad for DX; good for SS

