



**Publication of the
Northern California**

Contest Club



Issue **571**

February 2020



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NCCC February 2020 Meeting

Date: Saturday, February 22, 2020

Time: 1130-1400

**Where: El Tapatio Restaurant
40 Golf Club Road
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523 (925) 626-2420**

<https://www.eltaps.com/>

**Talk: Dan Werthimer, SETI@Home
“Is Anybody Out There? Ultra DX-ing”
See page 5 for Abstract and Speaker Bio
Reservations: TBA on Reflector**

President's Report - W6FB

What's the secret to winning contests? Some would say having the best transceiver. Antennas can make a huge difference, so that must be it. Or perhaps it is using the best logging program. Perhaps it's all three, and maybe more. So let's take a look.

The folks at Ken's N6RO super station have crafted some great scores and won many plaques over the years. As anyone who attended the NCCC picnic this past year can attest, N6RO has outstanding antennas, and many of them! From the numerous towers supporting monoband antennas pointing pretty much in every direction where there are other contesters, to the four squares that allow them to hear quite well on the low bands and many innovative homebrew designs, it is certain that the station's antennas make the difference. But then Ken's station has outstanding radios. Whether it be Elecraft K3s, the great FlexRadio transceivers, or those from Icom, Kenwood and others, over the years the radios at N6RO have given its operators outstanding signals and ability to hear others using those great antennas. And then N6RO has great computers running the best logging programs. Of course it didn't used to be that way, with many ops using pencil and paper for logging back in the day. All this adds up to a really great station that runs up super scores. Well, except for one thing. Without any operators there would be no points. Hmm. There must be something else.

Let's look at another station. W6SX has a pretty cool location (pun intended), up near Mammoth Lakes. Hank has several wire antennas, and very good radios and, of course, uses very good computer logging. You can hear him in almost every contest. But wait — he doesn't have great monoband beams, four squares and other various antennas that give N6RO such a great advantage. It must be the radios. Or is it?

Then there is the WRTC event that happens every four years. For the past several events the contest has featured two operators sitting in a tent with radios of their choice, but limited to antennas usually found at a little pistol's

Continued on page 3.



Officers:

President	Jack Brindle	W6FB	jackbrindle@me.com
Vice President /Contest Chair	Hank Garretson	W6SX	w6sx@arrl.net
Treasurer	Tom Carney	K6EU	treasurer.nccc@gmail.com
Secretary	Greg DesBrisay	N6GD	secretary.nccc@gmail.com
Past President	Bob Hess	W1RH	w1rh@yahoo.com
Director	David Jaffe	K6DAJ	k6daj@arrl.net
Director:	Bill Haddon	N6ZFO	n6zfo@arrl.net
Director:	Bill Fehring	W9KKN	bill+nccc@w9kkn.net

Volunteers:

New Member Mentor	Al Rendon	WT6K	wt6k@arrl.net
Charter Member	Rusty Epps	W6OAT	w6oat@sbcglobal.net
Awards Chair	Gary Johnson	NA6O	gwj@wb9jps.com
CQP Chair	John Miller	K6MM	k6mm@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
Webinars	Bill Fehring	W9KKN	bill+nccc@w9kkn.net
JUG Editor	Bill Haddon	N6ZFO	n6zfo@arrl.net

Thursday Night Sprint:

The Northern California Contest Club sponsors Thursday evening (NA local time) contest practice sessions of 30-minute duration.

On the Thursday (and, sometimes Friday also) prior to a major contest weekend, the practice format follows the upcoming contest.

Generally, on other Thursday evenings, a special format is followed, called NS or "NCCC Sprint". The NS began in the summer of 2004 as a snappy, concise contest occurring most Thursday nights, North American time. The power limit is 100 watts.

Thursday Night Contesting Director and Founder
NCCC CW Sprint
NCCC RTTY Sprint
NCCC Sprint Ladder
Sprint Web master www.ncccsprint.com

Bill, N6ZFO
Tom, N3ZZ (initially, Ken N6RO)
Ken, K6MR
Bill, N6ZFO
John, K6MM

non-NCCC:
Thursday night Contesting Advisory Group:
The Thursday night NCCC Net

Tim N3QE (Ladder Scores manager)
N6ZFO, Bill (Chair)
Mark K6UFO, (with W4NZ, N4AF, W9RE, K4BAI, N3BB, VE3YT and W0BH).
Ken, N6RO

station — a tri-bander and inverted-Vee. They do get to use the logging system of their choice, as long as they bring the computers. Even with this limited setup, these folks put up great scores.

So perhaps it isn't the best radios, best antennas or best computers that make set these folks apart. So what might it be?

The thing that is common between all of these stations, and many more, are the operators. As I noted, Hank is in pretty much every contest. So is someone at N6RO. They practice. A lot of practice! In the four years leading up to each WRTC multitudes of contestants spend their waking time participating in contests, developing their skills so that they might be able to sit in one of the tents. It isn't that the operators are so special, it is more that they are dedicated. Once they join a contest, they stay in the chair focussed on the task at hand, contesting. While they do this, they are developing their skills. How? Listening, for one. Listening for weak signals that most of us do not hear. It takes time and effort to develop this, concentrating on the noise coming through the antenna, through the radio and into the operators ears. In a recent CW contest N6RO (Ken himself) managed to pull out my very weak 160 meter CW signal, giving me a much needed QSO on the band. I was running very low power into a very badly matched antenna. No one else heard my signal that evening. But Ken did. All the years of listening and training his brain to pull out weak signals shows. It is a skill that is not learned, but only acquired through listening, practice with live signals, and staying in the chair. Ken, Hank, Bob (both K6XX and N6TV) and many others have built these skills by patiently sticking to their contesting regimen. All have gone through many radios, both good and bad, and now choose the best they can find to help their skills. But make no mistake, it is the skills they acquired while sitting in the chair in front of the radio and copying the signals they have heard that makes them great contestants.

Many of us less-accomplished contestants are now learning this lesson. It takes a lot of practice to be able to copy CW signals at 30 or 40 wpm (or faster). Some of this practice can be gained through CW computer practice programs, but the programs don't do as good a job at giving you the wide range of signal levels (and lots of them) that a live contest does. What's more, this is a skill you have to work at. Again, butt-in-chair time makes a huge difference.

What's the worst thing you can do? I'll be the poster child for this — get bored during the fray and find other things to do. It might be designing a new accessory for your station, reading the mail or news, or something else. In short, don't do it. Put everything out of the way, kill the email and news. You might even go so far as operating unassisted with computer networking turned off. Do not give yourself excuses to stray from your goal, but rather concentrate on what you are doing.

We used to wonder why W6SX spent so much time in every possible contest that came around. Hank has done a great job building his skills. He copies CW at high speeds quite well. He makes great use of his antennas. He is able to copy stations most of us cannot hear. Yes, having great radios helps, but it is the operator that makes the difference. When WRTC comes around, it is 120 or so great operators that are duking it out in tents with meager stations showing their skills. It isn't those who found excuses for why they didn't put in the effort.

As I mentioned, we have a lot of great ops in NCCC that show us almost every weekend the right way to contest. Let's follow their lead, get better, and start challenging them with our improved skills. Someday, perhaps I too might come close to being able to copy the wide range of stations that N6RO is able to copy...



WW-Digi: As most of you know, NCCC put in a great effort in the WW-Digi contest this past August. Our 51 stations bested the second place effort by about 30 stations. The results show that we did indeed win the first running, and we will be receiving the First Place World-Wide plaque sponsored by the Slovenian Contest Club. When it arrives we will be sure to show and share it!

NCCC sponsored the USA First Place Plaque, which was won by our great friends in the Yankee Clipper Contest Club. They put in a very good effort, led by two of their stations. Tine, S50A, recently shared a picture of the plaque we sponsored, as shown below. This beautiful plaque should find a prominent spot on YCCC's awards wall, and we hope that not only will it remind them of their efforts, but of their wonderful friends in NCCC. During my tenure as NCCC President, I have enjoyed a great friendship with YCCC president W1UE, who grew up in Los Gatos. So congratulations, YCCC!

Vice-President / Contest Chairman Report - W6SX

WPX

We have three focus contests this year: WW-Digi, RTTY Roundup, and WPX.

We won the first-ever WW-Digi Club. Well done all.

It appears that we won RTTY Roundup although it will be a few months before final results are published. Well done all.

Now WPX! There are two WPX opportunities for clubs. **WPX RTTY** and **WPX CW/SSB**.

Last year in WPX RTTY, we were fifth in the world, way behind the Bavarian Contest Club. PVRC was about 10% ahead of us in fourth and took the USA plaque. A little irony--PVRC sponsors the World plaque and NCCC sponsors the USA plaque. **Every Point! Every Log!**

Rules and geography and sunspots don't favor us. Beating the European clubs probably isn't in the cards. But we **can** beat PVRC and any other American club to take the WPX RTTY USA plaque.

Last year in WPX CW/SSB, we were sixth in the world, again way behind the Bavarian Contest Club. YCCC was second and PVRC was third. Beating the Bavarian Contest Club in WPX CW/SSB probably isn't going to happen. WPX CW/SSB does not have a USA Club plaque, but I would love to see NCCC be the top US club. **Every Point! Every Log!**

WPX RTTY is 8-9 February. Mark your calendars. <https://cqwpxrty.com/rules.htm>

Note that for WPX RTTY, "Use of QSO alerting assistance is permitted in all categories." This is a real score and fun increaser.

Multipliers are the name of the WPX game. Unlike most contests where you can get a clean sweep, WPX multipliers are virtually unlimited.

It's exciting Sunday to see score increase exponentially with each new prefix worked. Use the Reverse Beacon Network to fill your bandmap with new multipliers and power S&P from spot to spot. One thing that makes it even more fun is a good WPX call. If, like me, you have a run-of-the-mill call, consider borrowing a more exotic call. There are lots available in the club. If you are looking to borrow a call or if you have one to lend, advertise it on the NCCC list.

Double points on eighty and forty. Leverage eighty and forty. Particularly JAs—don't miss the openings. Don't neglect 14,101 and above. There will be lots of stations up there. Same for forty and fifteen.

If anyone needs help getting setup for RTTY, the NCCC Brain Trust is here to help. Post your questions to the NCCC list or email me directly. w6sx@arrl.net

Let's win the WPX RTTY USA plaque!

Every Point! Every Log!

KB Hank, W6SX



Northern California Contest Club

Excellence In Amateur Radio Contesting

NCCC Meeting—February 2020 Special Event

Is Anybody Out There? Ultra-DX'ing

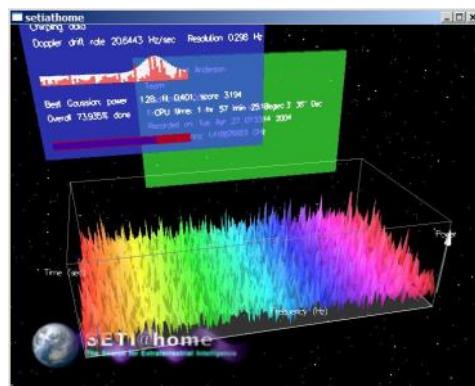
Dan Werthimer, SETI-Berkeley

Date: February 22, 2020

Time: 1130-1400

Location: El Tapatio, Pleasant Hill, <https://www.eltaps.com/>

Sign-ups: Watch Reflector



Abstract: What is the possibility of other intelligent life in the universe? Can we detect radio, infrared, or optical signals from other civilizations? Current and future SETI projects may provide an answer. Berkeley SETI Research Center chief scientist Dan Werthimer will describe the rationale for past and future searches and will show how new technologies are revolutionizing SETI. Dan will describe Breakthrough Listen, SETI@home, the new PANORAMA wide field all-sky-all-the-time project, as well as concepts for future SETI. For further information see: <https://setiathome.berkeley.edu/>

Bio: Dan Werthimer was in the “Homebrew Computer Club” with Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak; everyone in that club became ultra-rich, except Dan, because he wanted to search for ET. Although Dan isn't ultra-rich, he is the Marilyn and Watson Alberts SETI Chair, chief scientist of the Berkeley SETI Research Center, and principal investigator of SETI@home and the Center for Astronomy Signal Processing and Electronics Research (CASPER). Dan has testified to congress about SETI; he is co-author of "SETI 2020", and editor of "BioAstronomy: Molecules, Microbes and Extraterrestrial Life" and "Astronomical and Biochemical Origins and the Search for Life in the Universe." He has been Associate Professor in the engineering and physics departments of San Francisco State University and a visiting professor at Beijing Normal University, the University of St. Charles in Marseille, and Eotvos University in Budapest. He has also taught at universities in Peru, Egypt, Ghana, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Kenya.

Editor's Comments – Bill, N6ZFO

The second JUG of the new decade highlights the CQP, one of NCCC's own contests. The article by Dean, N6DE is the beginning of a year-long series that will examine CQP from a statistical viewpoint and make recommendations for fine-tuning the contest. I'm betting that one consequence of Dean's attention to detail will be a log submission number exceeding 1000 soon. Also in this issue, NCCC's favorite flogger, Skip, K6DGW relates the history of CQP's special certificate, the Worked All California Counties Award, first issued in 1989 and recently awarded to NCCC member W6DR.

Readers should feel free to respond to Dean's article, and any other, with a letter to the JUG. Maybe we'll have a "Letters to the Editor" column each month.

And you will find a compelling letter from long-time member of NCCC, J, VY1JA describing his on-going struggle with Alzheimer's. We debated whether a health-relate article should be published. In the end it is what J. wanted. The letter, or a version of it, also appeared on arrl.org recently.

73 Bill N6ZFO, Jug Editor n6zfo@arrl.net or 415 209-3084



The NCCC 50th ANNIVERSARY

The year 2020 is NCCC's 50th Anniversary Year. As the year proceeds, this column will include items relevant to our 50th year, including memories of past events, accomplishments, writings and and plans for celebration. Humor will be encouraged.

CQP Corner

Dean, N6DE

cqden6de@gmail.com

It is my pleasure to write a monthly column in the JUG about the California QSO Party. In the past few years, I have analyzed aspects of CQP and produced reports for Glen W6GJB, CQP Chairman, and the CQP Committee. The purpose of the N6DE monthly columns will be to share the highlights of CQP 2019 analysis with NCCC members. Goals are:

- 1) Identify any rules changes that can improve CQP 2020.
- 2) Identify other CQP 2020 improvements not related to rules.
- 3) Provide info and help to benefit NCCC members for CQP 2020.

Topics on my list to analyze, not in any specific order, include:

- 75m suggested operating window
- Multiplier distribution, and which multipliers (inside and outside of CA) need greater coverage in 2020
- CQP health check measured by participation trends
- County expeditions – what we can learn from the highest scoring ones, and what we can do to help other expeditions in 2020
- SSB QSO count – why was it relatively low?
- Amount of time spent by participants in CQP
- County signup – analysis of QSO estimates with actual QSOs made. Identification of stations that wanted to be successful, but which may benefit from our help in 2020
- New county tracker page – what worked and what didn't
- Club competition – are there any changes we should make in 2020?
- Any other suggestions for analysis by Glen W6GJB or NCCC members

75m Phone Analysis

Ken N6RO and Andy AE6Y suggested in their CQP 2019 comments to move the recommended 75m frequency from 3850kHz to lower in the band. Jim K9YC and others have supported this idea. With the recent NAQP Phone discussion on the NCCC list about suggested 75m frequencies, I wanted to analyze what actually happened in CQP 2019 and suggest changes for CQP 2020.

First, I wanted to understand if there is even a problem worth exploring. I compared CQP 2009 with CQP 2019. Both contests occurred near the sunspot minimum, so it's a fair comparison.

- In 2009, there were 29 stations that made over 100 QSOs on 75m.
- In 2019, there were only two. (N6O and W6AFA)
- Yet, there were 101 more logs received in 2019 (922) compared with 2009 (821).
- 80m CW QSO counts between 2009 and 2019 were about the same.
- 75m QSOs did not move to 80CW in 2019; they seemingly vanished.



Figure 1. N6DE's 75m Inv-Vee wire at 58ft. in this tree generated 165 QSOs on 75m in 2009 on a county expedition to Sierra County.

Clearly there is an issue on 75m worth studying. I analyzed the entire CQP 2019 log dataset for every reported 75m QSO. I took into account busted calls and corrected for them. This analysis includes stations that did not submit a log. Here are my findings:

- 1) Where were QSOs actually made in CQP 2019 on 75m? Thanks to most stations using rig control, I was able to adjust the 75m dataset and determine where every QSO occurred.

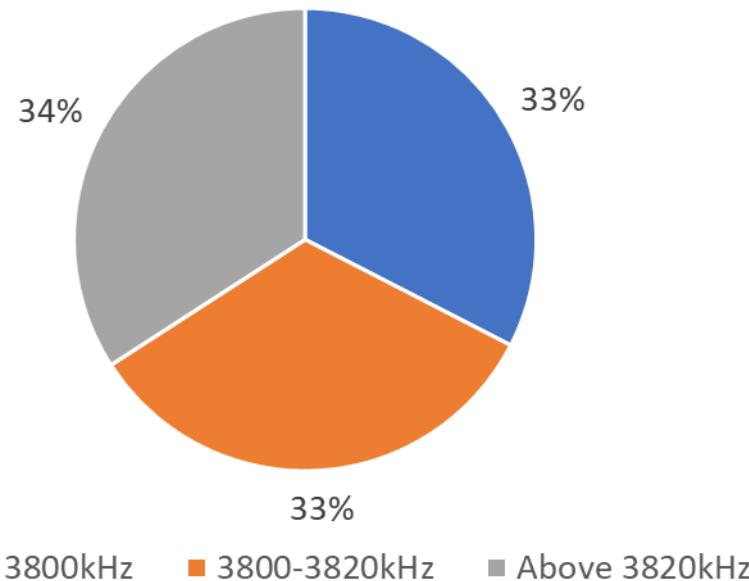


Figure 2. CQP 2019: Frequency used for 75m QSOs

- 2) What was the license class for every operator on 75m? Figure 3 shows both S/O and all operators listed in each Multi-Op. For example, noticed there are two Technician class operators listed as a part of Multi-Ops. It doesn't mean they necessarily made the 75m QSOs; it just shows who could possibly have made them among the Multi-Op operator list. For the 10 DX S/O callsigns that made 75m QSOs (almost all VE), they all had frequency privileges in our Extra class band, therefore I included them with the Extra total.

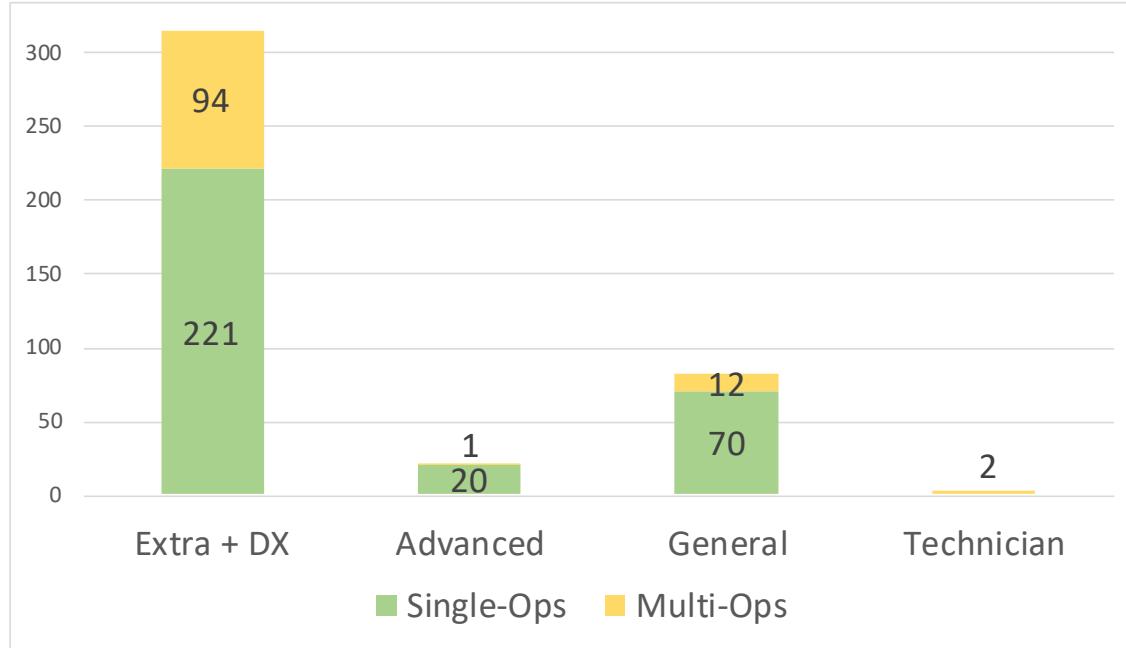


Figure 3. CQP 2019: License class of operators who made 75m QSOs

3. How many 75m QSOs were made by each license class? All county expedition stations are considered Extra class QSOs because all of the expeditions had at least one participating Extra class operator.

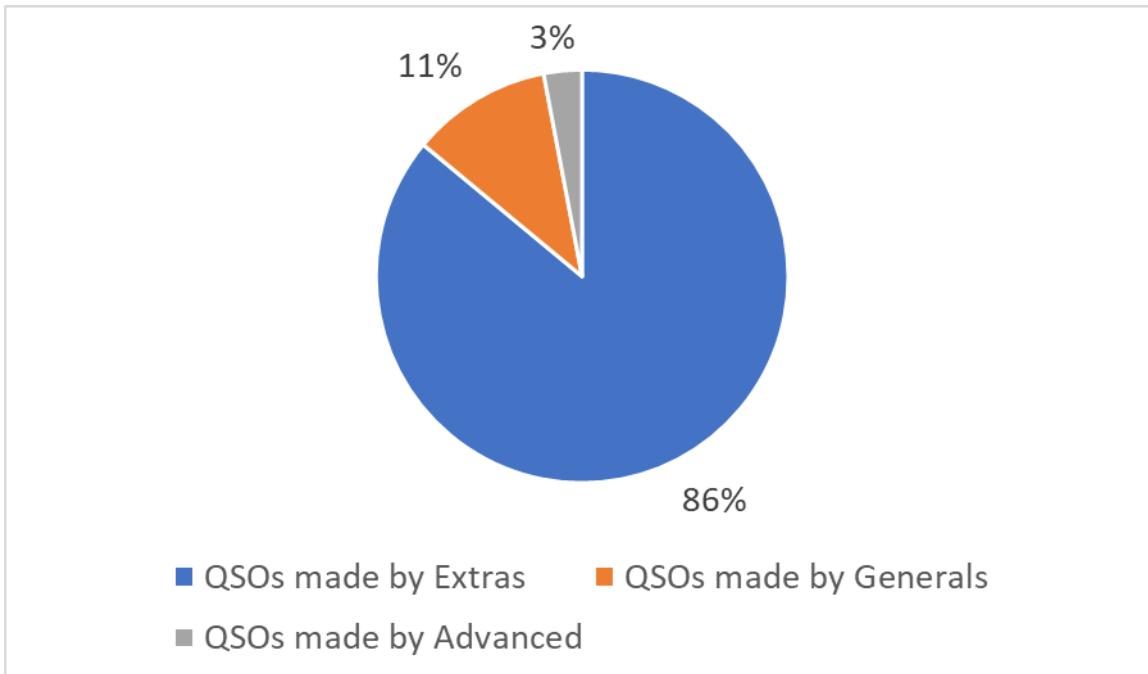


Figure 4. CQP 2019: 75m QSOs made by license class

4. How many 75m QSOs were made by each General Class Single-Op?

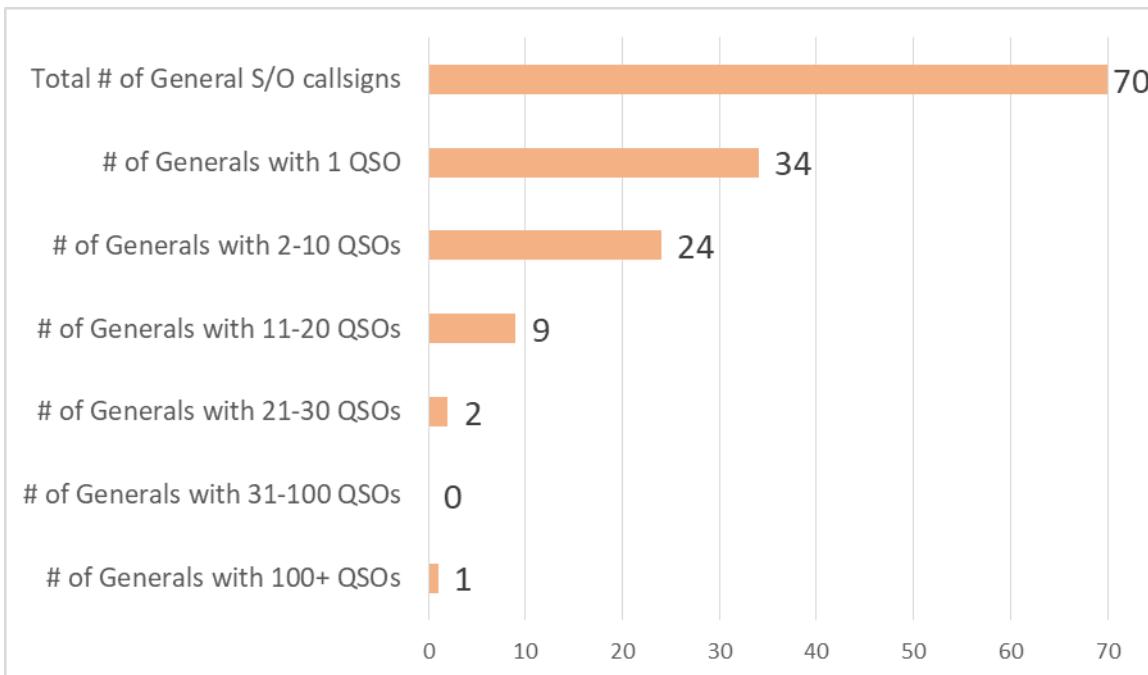


Figure 5. CQP 2019: General class S/O 75m QSO count

5. How many QSOs did county expedition stations make on 75m?

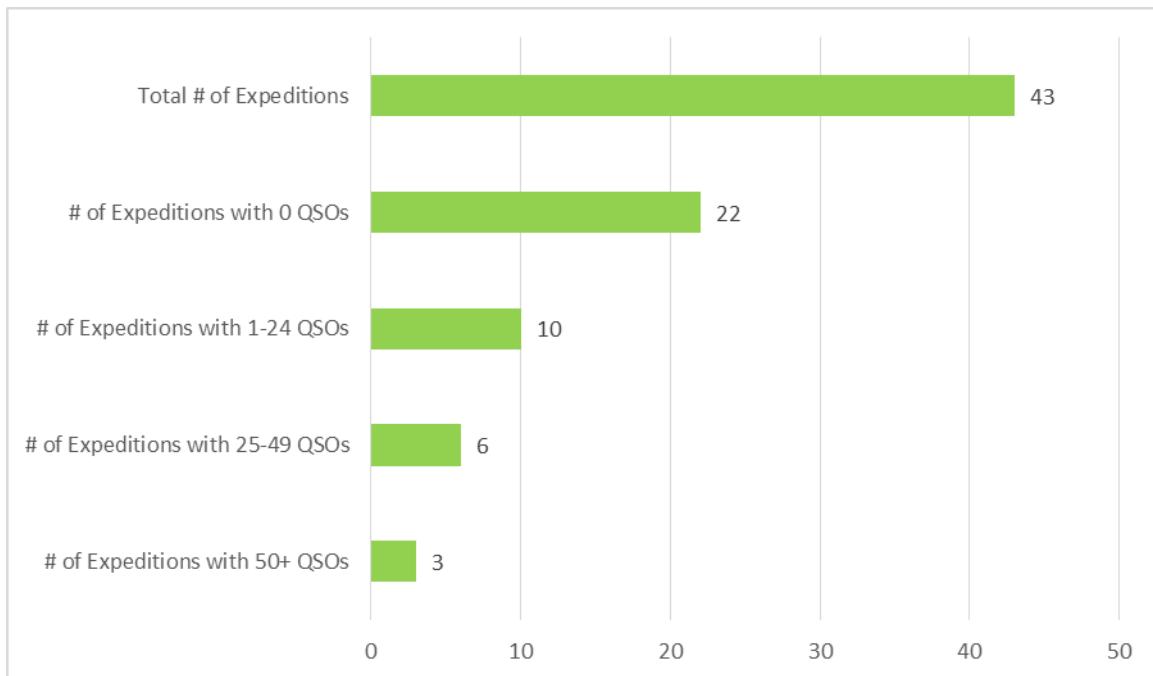


Figure 6. CQP 2019: County expedition 75m QSO totals

Conclusions

- 1) Stations are already staying away from our suggested 3850kHz 75m frequency. 1/3 of all 75m contacts took place below the General Class portion of the band. 2/3 of all contacts took place at least 30kHz lower than our suggested frequency. Clearly there is an aversion on the band causing stations to QSY lower in frequency to make QSOs. The state of the area around 3850kHz has apparently deteriorated over the last 10 years. Exposing potential contestants to this region does not benefit anyone.
- 2) The overwhelming majority of stations and contacts made on 75m are by Extra Class operators.
- 3) The number of General Class stations is significant (70), but half of them made just one QSO. It is doubtful that any of these one-QSO operators are candidates to become contestants. Further, only three General Class stations made more than 20 QSOs. It is notable however that yearly, serious CQP participant W6AFA made over 100 QSOs, so some sort of General Class coverage on 75m is still important.
- 4) Expeditions are now mostly writing off 75m. There is no advantage to spend time constructing and installing a resonant 75m antenna when they can just concentrate on a good 80m CW antenna which will yield more QSOs, better rate and higher points per QSO than 75m Phone. The K6T expedition made over 2,000 QSOs and won the M/S Expedition class. They had 0 QSOs on 75m. Other very successful expeditions with over 1,000 QSOs had fewer than 10 QSOs on 75m (N6M and K6MI). This trend will undoubtedly continue unless we give a compelling reason for our expeditions to be on 75m at all.
- 5) I believe that home stations are now finding low rate on 75m on Saturday night and going to sleep earlier than they did in 2009. They are waking up earlier on Sunday morning to work a more productive 40m band to the East Coast and Midwest. Plus they can stay on CW for a more fun [Page 11](#)

experience, and avoid the unpleasant disturbance that has taken the 75m band 3850kHz +/-20kHz or so.

CQP 2020 Recommendations from N6DE

- 1) Delete current rules suggestion “80/75 meters at 0300 and 0700 UTC.”
- 2) Delete current rules suggestion “Phone on 3850.”
- 3) Add new suggestion for 2020 rules:

75m:

- At 0300UTC and 0600UTC, try 3750-3790kHz and 3800-3820kHz.
- At 0400UTC, try 3650kHz for 30 minutes.

- 4) Publicize this to expeditions and all CQP 2019 participants instead of burying it in the rules and hoping everyone reads it.
- 5) Rationale:
 - A. I like N6KT's recommendation the best from our recent NAQP discussion on the NCCC list. I extended the lower range down to 3750kHz. Rich's recommendation for NAQP SSB makes good sense to adopt for CQP 2020 based on all the above analysis from Figures 2-6. It also avoids our CQP rules from officially including the politically sensitive DX window between 3790 and 3800kHz. What participants actually do is up to them.
 - B. We should suggest a frequency for our expeditions to try which can be used with their existing 80m CW antenna. There is little compelling reason for expeditions to operate 75m. Telling them to design a broadband antenna which covers 75m and 80m both, and giving them links to designs, likely won't persuade anyone. They will likely use the antenna they already have constructed. An 80m dipole or Inv-Vee should be able to cover both 3540kHz and 3650kHz under 2:1 VSWR. Every expedition had at least one Extra Class operator who could either operate or serve as control op. The idea is that expeditions can break away from 80CW for a productive 30 minutes at 0400Z to call CQ around 3650kHz and provide easy 75PH QSOs to the rest of us that wouldn't ordinarily have happened. This gives expeditions one fewer antenna to have to install. A few M/M stations run 75PH and 80CW simultaneously (N6O, W6BX), so this may impact them for 30 minutes, but will hopefully provide them with easy QSOs they may not have had otherwise.

Feedback

I look forward to hearing any comments you have. Feel free to email me, cqden6de@gmail.com , NCCC list, or Glen W6GJB.

Worked All California Counties (WACC)

"The Least Known Award in Ham Radio"

Back in 2008, a call went out for someone to take over administrative duties for the WACC. Figuring, "How hard could this be?," I volunteered, and for the very first time in my life when I've started something with that question, the answer has turned out to be, "Not very."

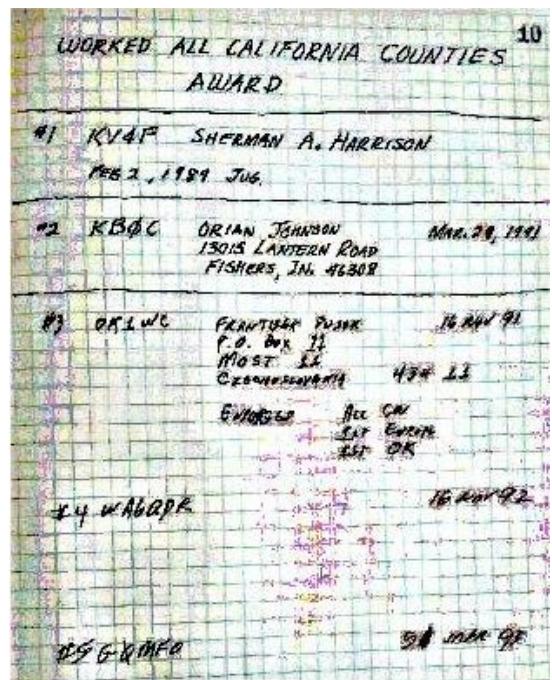
Origins: The origins of the WACC are almost, but not quite, lost in the antiquity of the mid-20th Century but there are some things I've been able to dig up. Unfortunately, since they all occurred around the time that BBN was inventing ARPAnet, right around the time that Larry Page was still in diapers and sources such as the Wayback Machine are not available for research. It is somewhat disheartening to realize that The Wayback Machine only goes "way back" to the middle of my adult life. Thus encouraged

...

It is certain that the WACC Award began in California. More specifically, it is almost certain that it was conceived and started in the San Francisco Bay area, and it is kind of certain that it began with the radio club in Oakland. Very little else, OK, actually nothing, is known about that origin. I have found a few references that indicate that the demand for the award was very limited and support for it waned. One of those references suggests that it was picked up by the Berkeley club for some period of time, subsequently fell into obscurity, and was finally revived by NCCC ... "when" that occurred still being an uncertainty. I haven't had time to comb through the JUG archives.

Known History: When I took on the administrative duties, I received a log book, about a ream of pre-printed certificates, and a small stack of past applications. The logbook, apparently repurposed from Phil Frazier's financial activities in 1975, is hardbound with quad-lined paper and begins on page 10. The pages are pre-numbered with a Bates numbering stamp. The first nine pages had been torn out.

Page 10 begins with award #1 to KV4F on 2 Feb 1989 so it's likely that this has been an NCCC-sponsored award for at least 30+ years. KV4F now belongs to Osborne Toller in Louisville KY, so it's possible that Sherman Harrison is a Silent Key by now. [Editor's note: *The first WACC recipient, KV4F, Sherman A Harrison, became K4KU. See <https://www.qsl.net/k4ku/> Sherman became a SK on Dec 28, 2012, as noted by QWCA. He participated, as KV4F, in some early NS Ladder contests. N6ZFO]*]



The logbook continues to page 12 where I received it. The last entry was #28 to WB2LOS on 21 Nov 2005. My first entry is #29 on 14 Jan 2008 to a guy now in Washington State with the call sign W6OAT.

Now, I don't want to start any conspiracy theories, but ... I had room on Page 12 for three more awards, KF7P, XE2K, and K0DEQ, and then the Bates-numbering skips to page 41 with evidence of 29 pages cut from the logbook. We have no evidence of what was on those 29 pages or who might have removed them from the logbook, but they are definitely gone.

When I assumed the role of WACC Admin-Dude in 2008 the rules published on the NCCC website were just a little outdated. Computers had been invented by this time, they were

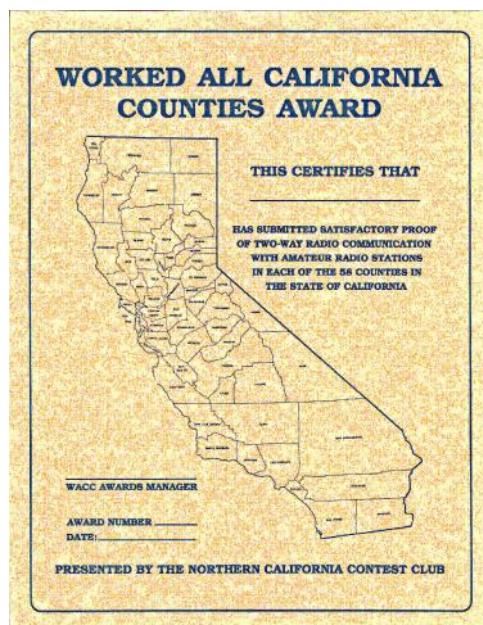
The first four WACC
Awards, 1987-1992.

being used to score the logs for the CQP, a number of people were working all 58 counties in one CQP, and mailing paper cards back and forth was really annoying. I was helping out with CQP scoring then and had a file with all the logs and we began accepting those QSO's as well as paper. I still load that file from CQP each year into a database which has grown very large since we've been getting close to 1,000 logs each year.

We also updated the rules to include the requirement that all QSO's had to be made after 9 Sep 1850, which has somehow disappeared from the NCCC website, and I requested deletion of the nominal fee. I was getting IRC's and US and foreign postage stamps in addition to "Green Stamps," and the whole thing was more work than it was worth. I continued to issue certificates as applications poured in ... well – appeared sporadically in my mailbox ... and the last certificate, #66 to NCCC member David, W6DR, was issued on page 45 on 21 Jan 2020. I have 55 blank numbered pages left in the logbook. Since I use both sides, and only the front pages are numbered, the Logbook should last well beyond me.

The application rate is not high enough for the postage costs to deplete our retirement account. I generally send the domestic certificates USPS Priority because the envelope is robust enough to protect the certificate. The foreign ones go in manila envelopes with cardboard inserts to prevent folding.

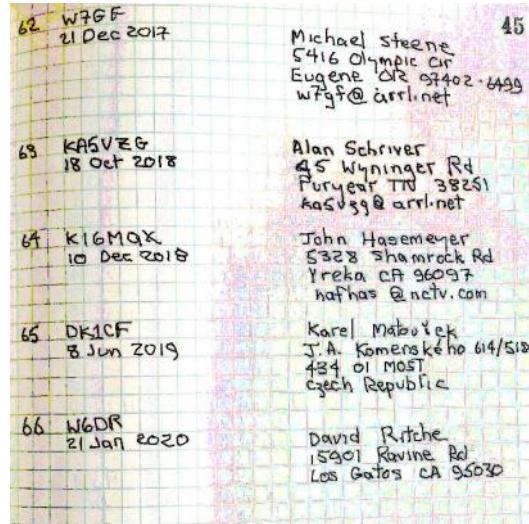
Certificate: The original certificate may date from near the origin of the award. That's unclear, but I have almost a full ream of them. It is decidedly underwhelming ... black ink on paper variously described as "smutty yellow," "yellowish beige," and "mustard." I have monochrome vision -- poor choice of Mom and Dad -- but mustard is a condiment, not a color, and I have no idea what "smutty" might mean.



Orginal WACC Certificate

NCCC has been supporting it for 3 decades or so, tying it into the public image of NCCC would also be great."

Gary and Katharine it turns out, really do have graphics talent, and a variety of the tools needed to create the design. He ran a couple or three ideas by me which I immediately ran by my wife. They were all great, but ultimately she, Gary, and I chose this one.

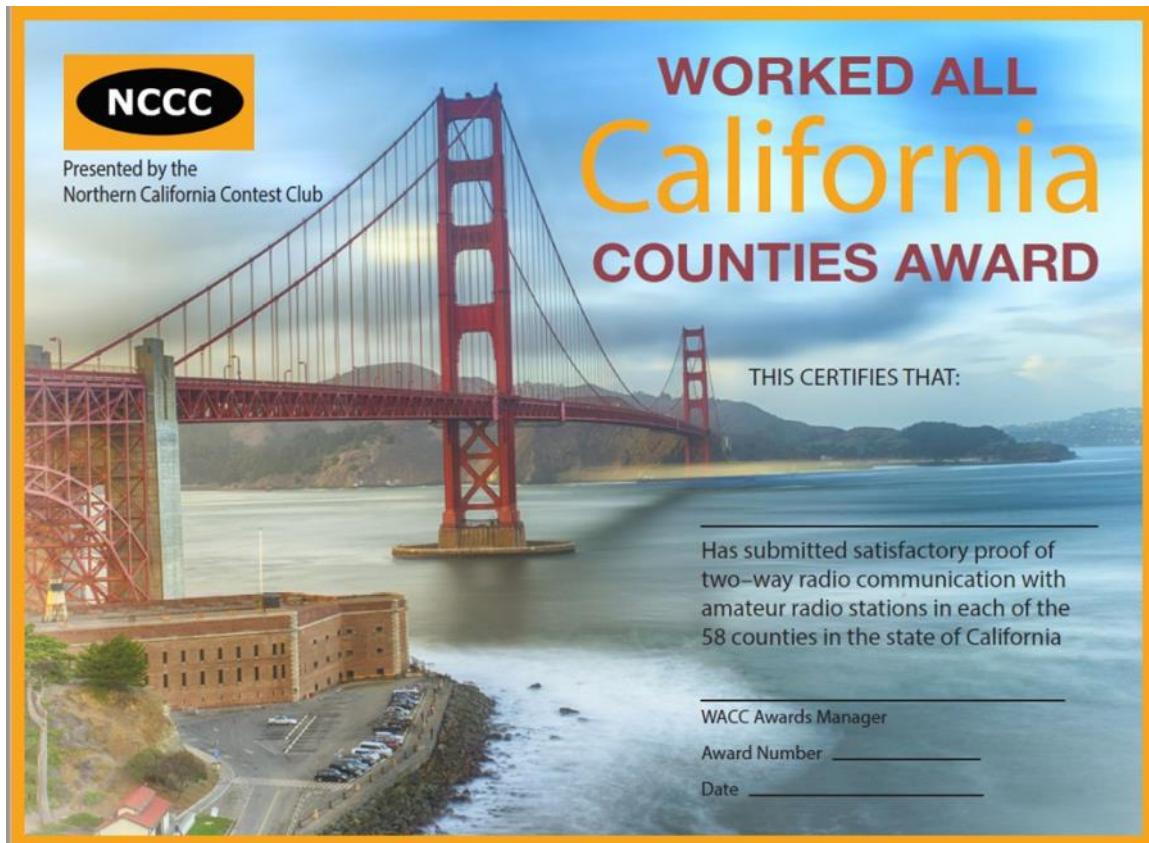


Recent WACC Awardees

I could create a template for the annotations in Powerpoint, run the certificate through the printer and add more black ink to an otherwise non-descript form.

This was the situation for a number of years. I asked a couple of times if anyone in the club with graphics arts skills would like to create a new certificate that ranked somewhat higher up the design and artsy ladder but got no offers. I thought about doing it myself however I'm a retired engineer and my graphics arts skills result in very rectilinear products resembling blue line drawings, and besides, I don't choose colors well. [Ed note: **Skip, you are a guy. Guys recognize six colors, women recognize 8 million, 476 thousand, 241 colors!**]

Then, last year, Gary, NA6O, with XYL Katharine, offered to create a new certificate for the award. When he asked if I had anything in mind, and after a couple of seconds explaining my own graphics skills in detail, I said, "It would be nice if it was colorful, and represented California in an unmistakable way. Since



Re-design of the WACC Award Certificate, NA6O and XYL Katharine

There is probably nothing that says “California” better, here at home and internationally, than the Golden Gate Bridge. The fact that Fort Point, a National Historic Site, plays a prominent role in the image really enhances the impact and it’s not hard to imagine Sir Francis Drake sailing in from the left. We now have an award for which many might decide is worthy of framing. I currently print these on demand on photo paper. Were the demand to increase, it would be worthwhile to have a small supply (less than a ream ☺) professionally printed.

As mentioned above, I have the old certificates plus some old applications. I plan on recycling the old certificates since there is no need for them any more. Someone needs to let me know if NCCC would like to archive one (or a ream) in the club records.

It is obvious that this job is not exactly life-consuming, so I'll continue to be the WACC Admin Dude for NCCC for the foreseeable future, or until the Board tweets that I'm fired.

Note from J., VY1JA - Introductory Comments by W6FB.

Many of you know long time NCCC Member J Allen, VY1JA. J has been a member for many years, dating back to the early days of the organization. J and Ann moved from Northern California to the Canadian Northern Territories quite a few years ago. Since then J has handed out the much needed VY1 multiplier in numerous Sweepstakes and other contests and events.

Unfortunately J has been diagnosed with a condition that until recently has terrorized way too many of our senior citizens. As his note shows, there is some hope, and we wish J the absolute best as he and Ann move forward up north. I have personally enjoyed many QSOs with J, at times stopping in a major contest to discuss various issues pertinent to his station while others waited, usually patiently, for their turn at VY1. I am delighted that J will be able to continue in the hobby for some time to come, and like all NCCCr's, offer whatever help we can to keep J going. We are printing this not just as a communication from J, but also in the hopes that it will give hope to others who may suffer from the condition. I sincerely hope for, and look forward to, many more QSOs with J in the future. Live life fully, my friend!

73!

Jack, W6FB, NCCC President

From J, VY1JA (letter also appears on arrl.org) : The Alzheimer's medication is working and is an answer to prayer. It does not make me better but it looks like it has stopped its progress completely, and I am left at this point, with some short term memory and concentration problems. The disease normally runs its course in from 3 to 11 years. Since the symptoms started a year ago, that means 2 to 10 years. When stressed, the confusion and short term memory problems are greater. What will this mean in the contests?

First, Alzheimer's is not a game stopper... I will be there in CQP and SSCW and from time to time in other contests you ask for if possible.

Second, from the second paragraph, you can guess that my wife Ann and I are conscious of the shortness of time. We have agreed that the station must be limited in size so that it can more easily be removed in the event of my loss. Tyson, VY1SLZ, has volunteered to assist Ann with the station removal at such a time. Ann and I agreed with Tyson to keep the station as simple and small as possible to reduce his future workload. This means that the high power gear, and the amps which made it necessary, are all going... along with everything other than a very modest station.

Third, the stress of managing the remote station was too much so it had to go. All the gear which was donated will be going for use in another rare section station, and since we found no volunteer in NT, it will be elsewhere under the ownership and care of Gerry Hull, W1VE. Some of you may have heard that both of the rigs I owned have failed. The Omni-7 died on TX and the tech says 50% chance that repair attempt will be long and unsuccessful. The FT920 has died on RX and it is a much older unit, also not worth putting money into. Chuck, K0RF, heard about this rig problem and is sending a working ICOM 765. This kindness means that I will be able to get on the air and encouraged me to try to handle the SS myself again.

So bottom line. VY1JA will be in CQP and SSCW, SKCC and CWOps events as often as health and family business allows, with a low power entry. As the main and only op, I ask for all contest ops to be patient with me, as I will stumble, get confused, forget call signs and ask for seemingly unnecessary repeats. I know this is not a great picture, but it is most likely going to accurate and is the best I can do.

73 for 2020 to all the folk in the club,
J.

RTTY-RU – Two Roundups This Year –

Probable Victory for NCCC

Bill Haddon, N6ZFO

The first focus contest of the year is the RTTY Roundup – an easily won NCCC contest and spirit-booster with victory in the Unlimited Club ARRL Competition seemingly guaranteed. The past digital contesting accomplishments are, in large part due to the enthusiastic efforts of W0YK, WK6I and the many other NCCC members who have put digital contesting on an equal footing with traditional modes. **But . . .not so fast.**

The post-contest crisis management team took over five days after the on-the-air RTTY Roundup concluded under good band conditions and seemingly good NCCC participation when Chris, NW6M, raised the alarm that log submissions were dangerously close to falling below the ARRL Unlimited 51-log boundary. A stunning victory in Medium Club competition would be less than satisfying to club members and, sadly, would hand PVRC a less-than-fully-deserved gavel victory in the Unlimited category, given that NCCC was probably ahead in points. Calculations by N6DE and N6ZFO indicated that was the case.

Thus the 2nd RTTY Round-up effort began – “**Round-up the Logs**” -- ultimately involving N6WM, N6DE, K6MM, W6SX, N6ZFO, W6FB, and W1RH in an intense, multi-day multi-faceted effort that was ultimately, we think, successful. A total of 105 email messages may have set its own NCCC record for a discussion thread.

During the seven day log submission period the new ARRL Contest Web page showed a list of submitted logs, posted without time delay, identified by call sign and club. Qualifying logs, for both NCCC and PVRC, could be verified from the submitted eligibility lists, which were also available at arrl.org.

Immediately a call sign change was spotted: AJ6CY had morphed to K6KM. Turns out that is not a problem, as operator and location drive the list. Later, the ARRL Contest Branch was notified and they confirmed that the entry was valid.

Obtaining score estimates during the log submission period was more complex. The claimed scores submitted to ARRL would not be posted on until five days after close of log submissions. During the discussion N6ZFO and N6DE used 3830scores.com to estimate the PVRC and NCCC totals, supplemented by educated guess about the scores of participants who did not post to 3830scores.com but did submit logs. The importance of doing this: had PVRC shown a probable lead in scores, a better “saving-grace” strategy might have been to enter NCCC logs in Medium Club competition, which could easily be won over FRC and MWA. K6MM also checked to see if, by asking PL259 members to submit to PL259 instead of NCCC, two West Coast gavel victories could be guaranteed in the Medium and Small (Local) club competitions. That was not possible due to limited participation by PL259, so the push to qualify NCCC for Unlimited intensified again.

With 1600 PST Sunday night looming, the deadline, the situation was grim and unsatisfying On Friday night, 48 hours before close of log submission, NCCC was at 50 logs.. The team never gave up. Large logs were scrutinized for calls of NCCC members worked by others but without a submitted logs and W6SX issued furtive pleas to the reflector for members who might have made a few qso's and decided their logs were too small to be important. The ARRL list was monitored frequently. The end result: reminding us of the success of the 49r's push to the Superbowl, triumph reigned when, just hours before the deadline, another log appeared for NCCC, allowing us to reach exactly 51 logs.

The hero of the effort was George Overturf, N6GEO, who submitted log number fifty-one less than six hours before the deadline . George explained: “on the RTTY RU weekend my grown children came up for a late Christmas and left with 30 minutes left in the contest. By the time I got the station up, I only got 17 QSOs, which I was too embarrassed to submit.” From all of us in the NCCC, a huge thank-you, George, and big KB for your effort!

Is there a lesson? It's may be the statement, oft repeated in Hank, W6SX's reports: “**Every Point, Every Log.**” Very encouraging was the way the individuals on the “crisis team” came together to solve the problem. But have we won? The claimed score entries posted on arrl.org showed our total was about eight percent ahead of PVRC. That's a generous margin. Stay tuned. Hopefully the story is a word to the wise, especially with respect to the upcoming WPX RTTY where we're in another intense competition with PVRC for US club victory.

NCCC News

Previous NCCC Meeting:

There was no meeting held in January, 2020.

BoD meeting minutes

The monthly minutes from the NCCC BoD meetings are available in the members only section of the NCCC website. See <http://nccc.cc/members/minutes.html>



Northern California Contest Club

Excellence In Amateur Radio Contesting

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.

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).
- Life Memberships.— \$250.-00 Contact . secretary.nccc@gmail.com. The 80/20 Rule:

Members who have reached 80 years young and been a NCCC Member for 20 years are eligible for Honorary life membership. Contact secretary.nccc@gmail.com

JUG Articles Wanted!

Without your help we cannot reproduce a quality newsletter so please consider submitting a suitable article!

We welcome any and all relevant articles for inclusion in the JUG.

The soft deadline is 7 days before month end. The preferred format is MS Word, Arial 12 point. Pictures should be full resolution. Send your material to Bill, N6ZFO at n6zfo@arrl.net . Don't worry about the formatting, we can take care of that if necessary! For pictures: Include them in-line with the text, OR identify them by file name at the insertion point.

Northern California Contest Club Reflector—Guidelines

This reflector is devoted to the discussion of contesting.

This includes contests, station building, dxpeditions, technical questions, contesting questions, amateur radio equipment wants/sales, score posting, amateur radio meetings/conventions, and membership achievements.

This does not include personal attacks, politics, or off-subject posts which will be considered a violation of the Guidelines.

Violations may result in removal of the violator from the reflector and possibly from club membership in good standing.



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