



October/November 1991

Editor: Tim O'Sullivan KE8OC

CONTEST SEASON BEGINS

Here we are at the start of another contest season. Where has the time gone? It seems like we just finished the last one and haven't quite finished the station upgrades we planned. Oh Well... October is upon us and that means get ready for CQWW Phone. The last weekend in October (26-27) sure comes up fast so make those final tweeks to your station and get on the air. For those of us who don't have big stations comes the 'tests that we can really do something with. Sweepstakes (Nov. 2-4 CW, Nov. 16-18 Phone) is the contest that we in Mad River can really do well in. Everyone can compete and participation is key for a big club score. This issue is packed with several articles on SS strategy whether you're going single-op, multi-op, full time or part time. Don't forget to fill in Mad River for the affiliated club on the summery sheet! CQWW CW also comes in November (23-24) so don't forget that 'test either. This year it occurs the weekend BEFORE Thanksgiving so get on the air and GO MAD RIVER!

USING YOUR OLD TERMINALS WITH NEW COMPUTERS

By Jim Stahl K8MR

I'm an old hand at single operator assisted DX contesting. In this category packet spots are obviously vital; but perhaps unlike operating in say multi-single, where a multiplier station tends to immediately pounce on a new spot, in S-O assisted a packet spot will frequently wait until other matters, such as a good run, are taken care of. Often this makes it desirable to have older spots than the most recent 8 or so that CT can provide. Further it can be handy to have a separate screen devoted to the packet spots, saving the computer screen for other functions. Therefore I have set up my station to have the TNC drive both the logging computer and the old ASCII dumb terminal.

This is a simple matter to have the TNC drive two displays. It is a considerably more complex matter to have two keyboards drive one TNC, so I didn't include this function. All outgoing spots, announcements, etc., must be done from the logging computer keyboard.

THE MAD RIVER RADIO CLUB

President: Dave Pruett, K8CC
2727 Harris Road
Ypsilanti, MI 48198

Treasurer: Ken Rogner, WD9INF
2520 Centennial Road
Toledo, OH 43671

Scorekeeper: Jim Stahl, K8MR
30499 Jackson Road
Chagrin Fall, OH 44022

Editor: Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC
744 Foothill
Canton, MI 48188

The TNC output, on the RXD line (pin 3 of J4 on the KPC-2) is wired to pin 3 of the terminal RS-232 port in parallel with the other wiring to the computer port. The TXD line (pin 2) to the terminal is NOT connected. The ground line (pin 7) is also connected. To facilitate the connection, I paralleled J4 Pin 3 to an unused pin (11) for the RXD line to the terminal.

In my precontest testing, I have found that having the full time packet display, containing the last 23 lines of spots, to be a significant help. With the modest effort required, I think you may find it worth doing.

The MAD RIVER RADIO CLUB net occurs every Monday evening at 8:30pm EDT on 3825 KHz ± QRM.

From the 'Big Fish' By Dave Pruett, K8CC

Well, here it is October, and the fall contest season draweth near. We're coming down to the wire for time remaining to get in those last few antenna tweaks before the weather turns cold and multiplies the task difficulty manyfold.

As usual, preparations are behind schedule at K8CC. My job has me hopping off to W5-land every six weeks or so, plus there has been lots of activity with NA to sap my time. Not to fear, we **WILL** be ready by the end of October. The crew is assembling to do multi-multi again in CQWW SSB, and I plan to do CW again single-op all-band (without packet). For SS, I will single op high power, while Tim, WD8IJP will reprise his successful high power SSB effort of last year. How about you? Are your plans in place for the fall competitions?

MRRC RESULTS

Recent issues of **QST** and **CQ** are out which document for all to see some of the results of our club efforts from last year. In CQWW, we were tenth in the world, and sixth in the USA, which is not bad for bunch of W8s so far from the coast. The clubs which finished ahead of us are much larger groups with more favorable propagation. We have much to be proud of here - way to go MRRC!

In ARRL DX, we were second in the Medium Club category in what was probably our best finish ever in terms of points. The club that finished above us was our competition to the east. Not to begrudge them their victory, but that should have been us MRRC...how about it? What can we do to improve in 1992?

FINDLAY MRRC MEETING

The Findlay MRRC meeting at the QTH of N8ET was again a true classic in the inimitable MRRC style. It was one of those evenings where wierdness reigned and you could never be sure whether or not the whole thing would not go into meltdown at any moment. For further details, you best check with Doc Sheller, KN8Z and ask about the tequila...

The "Mad River Picnic Club" NA Sprint Team was again out in force. Bill has just moved to his new QTH, and is not yet QRV on the HF bands. Jim, K8MR brought his traveling Sprint station in the form of a TS830, memory keyer, and a open-wire fed zepp. Jim also brought a 40m dipole,

and we will spare the reader the gory details of trying to get N8ET's ancient Accu-Memory and Doc Sheller's 12 VDC 30A power supply to work with the IC751A belonging to Tom, WI8W. Needless to say, a great time was had by all in the Sprint, although trying to corral QSOs with 100W and a 20' high wire brought out a challenge for all of the operators.

COLUMBUS MRRC MEETING AT K7EG

The next MRRC meeting will be held in Columbus, OH at the QTH of Jim Dennemy, K7EG. Elsewhere in this issue, you will find a map to Jim's QTH. If you have ever wondered what a 3L KLM 80M beam or a HyGain Sky Needle looks like, here is your chance. Jim has a really nifty station, and it will be worth the trip just to see some extraordinary amateur radio hardware. K8CC and some of the Detroit contingent will be making the trip, so hope to CU there!

NOVEMBER SWEEPSTAKES

Yes, November is almost here, and with it comes the ARRL November Section Sweepstakes, probably the granddaddy of all amateur radio contests. As chronicled in this column before, MRRC is going to make a major push for the Sweepstakes this year. In 1986, MRRC took the gavel for the Medium Club competition - can we do it again?

There is no secret in winning a club competition - get as many people on as possible and make as many points as possible. For a club the size of MRRC, we **HAVE** enough people to win - we just need to get them all on the air and making QSOs.

This can sometimes get out of hand - remember the "asterisk" year of 1971? But that's another story...

Now I'll admit up front that not everyone likes SS.

Personally, I think CW is a blast, but SSB is physically too demanding for me. Some people think there's no thrill to running Ws for 24 hours - however, nobody can say that SS is not a challenge.

However, MRRC has a long and successful tradition of SS efforts. If you scan the Top Ten Best Score lists elsewhere in this issue, you can see that there are quite a few successful SSers in our ranks. These people are quite likely to be QRV on the appropriate weekends in November - the trick will be to pull the rest of us away from

'Big Fish' (continued)

football or any of the other things we might be doing on a fall weekend.

I'm not going to lay a guilt trip on anybody, but consider this - MRRC is a *contest* club. Many of our MRRC comrades will be battling it out for section or division honors. Our club does not believe in quotas, mandatory log submissions, or anything else that would force someone to participate when they don't want to. Don't be afraid that the club officers or your peers will be scanning the QST results for non-participants. Nonetheless, is it too much to ask to donate a few hours (mostly fun) to make a few QSOs?

There are several articles in this 'Flash' which are intended to help motivate you to operate SS. For the die hards, check out the K8CC article on strategy when maximum effort is the goal. For those of us with other commitments or marginal enthusiasm, N8CXX's article on limited-time will show you how to fit some SS QSOs into your busy schedule.

Consider this - making 100K in SS is within the reach of almost any MRRC member who is willing to put in the time - 670 QSOs and 75 sections is all it takes. This can be done on CW in twelve hours from a big station, maybe sixteen hours from a small station with a KW. On SSB, the same thing can be accomplished in about 80% of the time. Now I'm not saying that you need to use 100K as your goal - I'm just pointing out what could be achieved by anyone.

Now if you're reading this and saying to yourself "I hate domestic contests - they don't need me to get on", let me say it one more time: **WE NEED EVERYONE TO GET ON FOR SS**. If you have a station, or have access to one, please get on and make some QSOs. Don't forget the dates: SS CW is November 2-3, 1991, while SS SSB is November 16-17, 1991.

Finally, don't forget to send in your log, and clearly mark your summary sheet **MAD RIVER RADIO CLUB**. Most major logging programs do SS (both **NA** and **CT** are QRV for the task), so your log processing time should be nil. Furthermore, I will make this offer: K8CC will personally type into the computer and score any MRRC over 100K for a member who does not have access to same, and who is in need of this service to send the score in. I am serious - if the paperwork is a problem, I will make it go away as long as the points go to MRRC.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

I attended the ARRL National Convention in Saginaw, MI, in August along with Mike, W8UA. While cruising through the exhibits, we came upon the booth for the Quarter Century Wireless Association (QCWA). Yes, fellas, there **ARE** people in MRRC who have been in this hobby long enough to join this time-honored organization. Although K8CC has three years to go before I can qualify, W8UA has his quarter-century under his belt so he decided to join.

Sitting behind the table at the QCWA booth was Harry Dannals, W2HD, who was president of the ARRL for several years in the early seventies. While Mike was filling out his application, Harry happened to notice my MRRC tee-shirt. Boy, I thought he was gonna blow a fuse. It seems that he was elected ARRL president in early 1972, and shortly thereafter went to Dayton for the first time in that capacity. As these things go, he was greeted at the convention by a none-to-insignificant controversy concerning the previous Sweepstakes and a certain Midwest contest club!

Yeah, you guessed it - the infamous asterisk year of the MRRC!

Those of us who were around back then probably remember that this was no minor flap, considering that the "vanquished" was the Potomac Valley Radio Club. Harry seems to remember the details rather clearly - you would think people would forgive and forget after twenty years!

Once again, our notoriety preceeds us...

Hope to see y'all at Columbus!

73 de Dave, K8CC

OCTOBER MAD RIVER RADIO CLUB MEETING

OCTOBER 12, 1991

The above map was supplied by Jim Hurt, KC8MK showing the yellow brick road to the QTH of Jim Dennemy, K7EG, who will host the October MRRC meeting near Columbus, OH. The festivities will get under way around 12:00 noon on Saturday, October 12, 1991, and will run most of the afternoon. Why not take the opportunity to check out Jim's FB hardware and meet some of the Columbus gang?

SWEEPSTAKES RECORDS FOR MICHIGAN through 1990

| <u>CW Single Operator - High Power</u> | | <u>CW Single Operator - Low Power</u> | | <u>CW Multi-Operator</u> | |
|---|-----------------|--|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 90 K8CC | 171,300-1142-75 | 74 W8CQN | 137,492- 929-74 | 87 K8AQM | 162,504 |
| 1098-74 | | | | | |
| 83 WA8YVR | 159,100-1075-74 | 76 W8CQN | 131,254- 899-73 | 77 W8UM | 125,720- 890-70 |
| 88 K8CC | 156,436-1057-74 | 75 W8CQN | 116,060- 829-70 | 86 K8AQM | 120,960- 840-72 |
| 78 K8LX | 153,150-1021-75 | 77 K8IF | 113,734- 779-73 | 80 W8UM | 110,016- 764-72 |
| 83 K8CC | 152,144-1028-74 | 90 K8SB | 109,520- 740-74 | 79 W8UM | 105,376- 712-74 |
| 86 K8CC | 151,848-1026-74 | 90 KJ8A | 108,040- 730-74 | 84 K8JRK | 102,200- 700-73 |
| 77 K8LX (WA8ZDT) | 151,694-1039-73 | 81 N8EA | 103,660- 730-71 | 83 K8AQM | 100,196- 677-74 |
| 81 K8CC | 150,480-1045-72 | 89 KJ8A | 102,564- 693-74 | 90 KB8INK | 99,400- 710-70 |
| 79 W8UA (WA8ZDT) | 147,852- 999-74 | 76 WA8ZAV | 102,528- 712-72 | 74 WB8FUO | 97,056- 674-72 |
| 81 K8LX | 147,852- 999-74 | 78 WA8MAM | 102,120- 690-74 | 88 NE8O | 94,544- 622-76 |
| | | | | | |
| <u>SSB Single Operator - High Power</u> | | <u>SSB Single Operator - Low Power</u> | | <u>SSB Multi-Operator</u> | |
| 90 K8MJZ | 228,912-1506-76 | 90 N8CXX | 154,924-1006-77 | 87 K8CC | 214,500-1430-75 |
| 78 K8LX (WA8ZDT) | 223,200-1488-75 | 83 WD8MGQ | 154,364-1043-74 | 87 N8CXX | 205,050-1367-75 |
| 81 K8LX (WA8ZDT) | 222,592-1504-74 | 85 WD8MGQ | 151,548-1038-73 | 87 K8MJZ | 204,150-1361-75 |
| 90 K8CC (WD8IJP) | 220,800-1472-75 | 88 WD8MGQ | 148,808- 979-76 | 83 WD8CRY | 192,992-1304-74 |
| 79 K8LX (WA8ZDT) | 212,528-1436-74 | 84 WD8MGQ | 125,060- 845-74 | 81 K8SS | 182,208-1248-73 |
| 90 KB8TI (N0AON) | 204,666-1329-77 | 90 AA8AV | 120,736- 784-77 | 86 W8SH | 179,672-1214-74 |
| 74 WA8YVR | 204,092-1379-74 | 89 NE8O (KA8JBK) | 119,928- 789-76 | 82 WD8CRY | 179,376-1212-74 |
| 90 WB8OHO | 202,048-1312-77 | 76 W8TR (WA8PSD) | 117,718- 829-71 | 85 W8SH | 176,860-1195-74 |
| 88 AI8D | 188,480-1240-76 | 82 WD8MGQ | 116,476- 787-74 | 80 WD8CRY | 173,308-1171-74 |
| 72 WA8ZDT | 187,738-1272-74 | 78 W8LAQ | 113,442- 777-73 | 81 WD8CRY | 158,264-1084-73 |

SWEEPSTAKES RECORDS FOR OHIO through 1990

| <u>CW Single Operator - High Power</u> | | <u>CW Single Operator - Low Power</u> | | <u>CW Multi-Operator</u> | |
|---|-----------------|--|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 90 KW8N (WD8IXE) | 169,800-1132-75 | 89 K8BL | 136,192- 896-76 | 83 WB8JBM | 161,616-1092-74 |
| 90 NG8D (K3UA) | 165,376-1088-76 | 88 K8BL | 130,720- 860-76 | 82 WB8JBM | 154,944-1076-72 |
| 78 K8NZ | 161,320-1090-74 | 87 K8ND | 117,822- 807-73 | 81 WB8JBM | 154,322-1057-73 |
| 78 K8MR | 158,508-1071-74 | 79 K8EKG | 116,800- 800-73 | 84 WB8JBM | 150,088-1028-73 |
| 81 K8NZ | 157,916-1067-74 | 90 KV8Q | 114,750- 765-75 | 74 WB8JBM | 147,022-1007-73 |
| 88 KW8N (WD8IXE) | 156,712-1031-76 | 82 K8BL | 110,016- 764-72 | 79 K8ND | 142,080- 960-74 |
| 78 W8WPC (K8BPX) | 156,584-1058-74 | 82 KU8E | 109,872- 763-72 | 81 K8ND | 141,044- 953-74 |
| 87 WD8IXE | 156,288-1056-74 | 83 KU8E | 109,520- 740-74 | 78 WB8JBM | 138,380- 935-74 |
| 87 K8AZ (K8NZ) | 155,400-1050-74 | 78 K8EKG | 108,216- 752-72 | 80 WB8JBM | 137,232- 953-72 |
| 77 K8MR | 154,216-1041-74 | 85 KU8E | 107,596- 727-74 | 86 W8LT | 135,716- 917-74 |
| | | | | | |
| <u>SSB Single Operator - High Power</u> | | <u>SSB Single Operator - Low Power</u> | | <u>SSB Multi-Operator</u> | |
| 78 W8KIC (WB8MZZ) | 219,450-1463-75 | 89 K8BL | 142,142- 923-77 | 89 KW8N | 260,106-1689-77 |
| 81 K8ND (WB8MZZ) | 217,412-1469-74 | 81 K8EE | 118,114- 809-73 | 85 WB8JBM | 255,744-1728-74 |
| 76 WA8PLZ (WB8AYC) | 213,014-1459-73 | 82 K8EE | 113,150- 775-73 | 87 WD9INF | 245,100-1634-75 |
| 77 W8KIC (WB8MZZ) | 208,800-1392-75 | 86 KQ8M | 108,624- 744-73 | 83 WB8JBM | 229,252-1549-74 |
| 78 K8AZ | 207,150-1380-75 | 87 K8BL | 104,390- 715-73 | 86 WB8JBM | 228,068-1541-74 |
| 78 K8MR | 205,350-1369-75 | 80 WA6EZV/8 | 104,340- 705-74 | 89 WD9INF | 207,480-1365-76 |
| 81 K8MN | 204,832-1384-74 | 83 KC8JH | 100,010- 685-73 | 82 WB8JBM | 205,128-1386-74 |
| 79 WB8MZZ | 202,464-1368-74 | 80 K8BD | 98,532- 714-69 | 80 K8ND | 202,464-1368-74 |
| 82 K8ND | 199,208-1346-74 | 75 WB8MZZ | 96,702- 681-71 | 81 WB8JBM | 202,464-1368-74 |
| 82 W8JI (WB8MZZ) | 196,988-1331-74 | 78 WD8ALG | 94,572- 639-74 | 80 WB8JBM | 201,918-1383-73 |

SS - A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

By John Tymensky, N8CXX

I just finished reading the "Flash" and decided to talk about SS from a part time perspective. In the 1990 SS, 47% of the membership worked less than 20 hours. In fact, the average was 15.6 hours. I worked 20.1 hours and made 1006 Q's, "A" mode.

The first thing is to determine how much time you can afford to operate. Next, make out a schedule. This will allow others, (wife, friends, family), to plan around your operating time. Poor communication can destroy your effort.

Now, read K8CC's article on SS. Both parts. Make a list of what you can do, extra radio(s), computer and new or repositioned antennas. Try to get everything ready in advance to allow you time check out the system. Especially the computer software. I have heard tales of the software failing in the first 10 minutes. Most of the time it's the user's unfamiliarity that causes the problem. KNOW THE PROGRAM...

We now have to face reality. There are bands that you will be strong on. Others where you will be weak. If you can't improve the weak ones, plan your operating strategy accordingly. No use wasting time trying to run rate when your signal is not loud enough or the antenna's pattern does not favor that area. KNOW YOUR SYSTEM!!!!

Your strategy will make the difference. This is a domestic contest. So think domestic. SS starts prior to supper for most of our target area. There is a rush at the beginning, then a brief lull then back to full strength until W6's go to bed. The first night has the most activity.

Let's take a look at a couple of plans based on hours available.

4 HOURS (22z to 02z) The start of the contest This is the most hectic time of the contest. Everybody is trying go hold a frequency. This is where a decision should be made. S & P or CQ. If your not loud, you really don't have a decision. S & P can net you 60+ Q's and a lot of Mults. Limit your time to S & P. If you find a clear frequency, start CQing. This is not a bad philosophy. Also keep moving, If you are CQing with no results in 3 minutes, MOVE. Late in the contest this time may go to 5 minutes.

4 HOURS (00z to 04z)

Use 10, 15 & 20 to knock off the western mults. Now go and sit on 40m. Things will be spreading out, so just find a frequency & start CQing. You

will be surprised at your rate. As for the hard core SS'ers, they will be there all weekend. Forget them, they will work you. I guarantee it. Remember, your time is limited.

8 HOURS

There are 2 ways to do this. One, would be to start at the beginning. During the next 8 hours, your signal should be heard by a majority of all contestants. In my first 9 hours, I worked 534 Q's. The balance of my Q's (470) came in 11 hours.

The other way is to split your operating times in segments. You may be able to do 4 hours both Saturday & Sunday nights. The last 4 hours of the contest are usually as hectic as the first 4.

I believe you can determine what type of operating strategy would be require for 12 or 16 hours. Sunday afternoons is usually slow. It is really not a bad time to be on. Because of your low operating hours, you will be able to run rate with some success.

A couple of thought starters. Don't forget 10m. There are numbers of novices & techs that want to be part of the contest. They may be slow or require explanation, but they will fill up log pages. I worked 301 in 5 hours.

If your in "A" class, try holding up your operating on 40 m. I went there later. The crowd was down and I could generate a consistent signal. In 3.75 hours, I worked 248 Q's. (00z to 345z)

Try doing the same on 75m. In 2.25 hours, I worked 140 Q's. (346z to 06z) You may want to band switch more often than me. I really hate to switch. My rate sheet looks like the MUF graph.

This year tha ARRL is continueing the pins & has added a coffee mug for a clean sweep.

I would like to submit to the members & the board the following proposal: Any member that submits a score in SS for MRRC that meets the following requirements will have the club (MRRC) buy the coffee mug.

Requirements:

- A Clean Sweep
- Minimum of 500 Q's

Remember, the idea is to have fun and turn your score in for MRRC.

PREPARING FOR SWEEPSTAKES

Part II - Strategy

By Dave Pruet, K8CC

Last issue, we talked about setting up your station to extract the maximum performance in SS. This month, we want to cover some strategies that can be successfully integrated into the SSer's repertoire. The ideas presented here are aimed at the operator who is going full bore. However, many of the comments can also be successfully applied to maximize the score of the part time effort. Station effectiveness is a factor (antennas, low or high power, multiple radios, etc.), but probably the best advice is for the "little gun" or casual entrant to think like a "big gun" whenever possible.

Strategy in SS boils down to one essential goal: finding QSOs to work. We'll touch on section multipliers at the end, but it has been proven that the best SS results come from focusing on QSOs. The obvious conclusion from analysis of this goal is that **rate is everything**.

Last month we pointed out that since you can only work a station once, band planning (as you might in a DX contest) is of limited value. Maintaining a good rate is then a matter of finding the best band for the given time and optimum target audience.

OFF TIME STRATEGIES

SS differs from DX contests in that you are compelled by the contest rules to not operate six hours of the contest period. (Actually, this may be the most popular entry category of all!) When you take these off time periods may be the most important strategic decision you can make.

Some people operate SS by going 24 hours straight. This is certainly one way to do it, but it is not an optimum strategy. The biggest problem is that there aren't many people on the air from 1000-1200 GMT. The West Coasters have all gone to bed, and the Easterners are not up yet. Furthermore, this philosophy does not address what is probably a fundamental SS truth: the need to give the maximum number of stations the opportunity for a QSO with you.

Consider this: the serious SSer is likely to be on the air for 24 of the 30 hours, so that the chances of working him are pretty good. The casual participant is another story. Most of these guys get on for a couple hours then QRT - they are less likely to get on for multiple periods during which they might encounter you.

So the best strategy would be to space out your operating periods to increase the chance that you will encounter the maximum number of stations. Another factor is that the contest rules specify that an off time must be a minimum of 30 minutes in length, thus limiting how much you can spread out your operating.

One caveat to this rule is that on either CW or SSB, it is probably the best strategy to operate the first twelve hours straight without a break. Activity tends to be higher on Saturday, and experience has shown that your rate is likely to be better even in the middle of the first night than during the second day. On CW, it is probably important stay on until the rate drops suddenly, usually in the 09-10Z hour. On SSB, you might consider going QRT earlier (perhaps 08Z), based on the premise that you might be able to "schmaltz" more casual QSOs during Sunday afternoon.

In either case, you should test the band by coming back on around 12Z. On either mode, there seems to be a group of people who get on early Sunday morning prior to church or other Sunday activities. If the rate dries up quickly, don't be afraid to take an off time to let the band fill up. Be careful, make sure that the rate has truly dropped - this is where the computer logging programs with rate displays are invaluable.

Once you get into Sunday morning, the rate will likely pick up and be pretty solid for a couple of hours. Plan to take an off time around 17Z for lunch, most other operators will be doing likewise.

Sunday afternoon is where SS is won or lost. On CW, lots of bandswitching and an integrated approach to CQing and "search and pouncing" is required to keep the rate up. On SSB, it pays to get friendly and entice the casual operator to give you a QSO. In either case, it pays to save **SEVERAL** off time periods for Sunday afternoon when you are competing more against NFL football than other SSers.

Some people like to save some off time for the end of the contest, but I have found it better to operate right to the end. Usually, there are a number of people who get on for the last few hours "just to give out a few QSOs". Also, this past year I took off the last half hour only to miss NP4Z for a section! Be sure to keep an accurate

count of your off time.

FINDING QSOS IN THE CW SS

Ultimately, success in Sweepstakes comes down to finding people to work. As we said before, finding the serious SSer to work him is not the problem - the real issue is making sure that you don't miss any QSOs with the casual stations.

On CW, the first twelve hours are the most important. Try to get a good start - I usually begin on 40M, which will be full of SS stations but usually dries up after about 20 minutes. Switch to a high band (20M/15M/10M) and do a couple of fast S&P sweeps. After another 20 minutes, go back to 40M. This strategy usually nets a first hour in the high seventies, with an 85 one year.

Try to hammer 40M pretty good in the first three hours - propagation is excellent from W8 during these hours to your prime target areas. Around 00Z, 40M often is strange, probably due to the arrival of sunset. I find this to be a good time to scour the high bands before hitting 80M.

Keep in mind that 40M and 80M will be your prime nighttime bands. If 40M stays relatively short, stay on it as much as possible as you can work virtually the entire USA at the same time. If 40M goes long, switch to 80M, which will have propagation to your prime target areas, but you lose the opportunity to work some of the weaker western stations.

Sunday morning on CW is a mixed bag of tricks. Try to clean up the last few stragglers on 80M, then hit 40M for a while - the rate will be lower than the previous night, but is often in the 40s or low 50s. Around late morning (14Z-15Z), I have had good luck CQing on 20M to the west. Again, patience is a must because the rate is not terrific (this is where the second radio is magic), but it is better than anything you are likely to encounter in the afternoon.

After 17Z, the only strategy is to keep moving, trying different bands and beam directions. With two radios, I try to be always CQing somewhere while searching the other open bands. With only one radio, you gotta keep moving, but your decision to CQ or S&P is difficult. Try CQing down low in the extra band, then up high. Try slowing down your keyer - no matter how much you enjoy 35 WPM CW, it is amazing how many people cannot copy at that speed. Alternate between CQing and S&P. **NEVER** give up - if one technique does not work, try something else.

As you approach the end of the contest, keep doing the same things while moving your focus lower in frequency. Off time strategy comes into play here - don't try to force a band to work while people are watching football or eating supper. Try to think like a part-time SSer and go where you think he will be in the last few hours.

MODUS OPERANDI FOR SSB

I believe that the SSB SS does not have the subtlety of the CW event. Two factors are at work here - SSB QSOs take less time to execute, and there are more casual participants on SSB than CW. This does not mean that SSB does not require strategy and skill - it's just that the techniques are different.

First, prepare yourself to CQ your brains out! Even though the SS exchange is rather lengthy, you will call lots of CQs for each QSO so a voice keyer is a highly desirable accessory. Second, you should be prepared to adopt a friendly demeanor to your CQing to cause the casual op to want to work you (referred to in the K8CC vernacular as a "QSO party technique").

Your band strategy should not be too different from CW. Start on 40M, but if everyone is up on the high bands, you may be forced up there too. CQing westerners on 15M/10M can be productive, but try to get to 40M as soon as the rate will allow. Stay there as long as possible - there are a lot of guys to work within the high angle skip range. Enduring the BC QRM at night is no treat - however, if you are loud there are a lot of western little guns to work.

At night, alternate between short skip 75M and nighttime 40M. Watch your rate carefully in the middle of the night - sometimes 75M can be real good, but other years it is better to save your operating time for Sunday afternoon.

Sunday morning should be pretty good, as there are quite a few casual operators to work. Heed the advice from CW, and take your off times during regular meal hours and the NFL game. Afternoon should not be as dismal as CW, but keep a sharp eye on the rate meter

Hopefully, these comments will help you focus your efforts on a winning SS score. Good luck on the appropriate weekends in November!

SWEEPSTAKES: THE MULTI APPROACH

By Ken Rogner, WD9INF

A lot is being written about single-op strategies for Sweepstakes, but my favorite way to run SS is in the multi category. I don't know if my age is showing or whether I really enjoy working with another person. There are many ways to run a multi-op Sweepstakes station. It is VERY IMPORTANT to follow the rules which only allows for ONE transmitted signal at a time! There is no limit on the number of receivers you can use.

At WD9INF, we choose to operate with two stations. The two radios are connected to a switching mechanism that allows only one transmitter to operate at a time. Whoever hits the footswitch first gets priority, locking out the other transmitter. Now THAT can really frustrate the other op! (It's helpful to be GOOD friends with the other op!) We usually keep it a two-man operation for the entire weekend although a third person can really be helpful IF he knows how to keep calls short and times his transmissions as to not interfere with the "running station." Oh yes, we designate one station as the CQ/run station using the other for search and pounce. The station designation changes according to rate, band conditions, clearness of frequency, freshness of the operator, etc. When things get slow, both stations may call CQ until one station establishes rate. Two stations calling CQ can make it quite difficult to hold a frequency as there are periods where you can't transmit because of the other station and others are quick to steal away your good spot. (I find it MOST distressing to try to respond to, "Is the frequency in use?" when the other transmitter has locked out mine!) Probably the BEST rule we have is 'keep the transmissions short.'

When it comes to logging, we have a computer at each station. We've used CT in multi-transmitter mode but have become very frustrated when the other station hits RETURN and wipes out your entry. The unfortunate thing is that you can't see what the other person is doing. If you're both entering data at the same time, the one who hits ENTER first wins. All of the other data is erased!

The other problem with not seeing the other computer is making sure you're not giving out the same serial number. In a two man operation, you can arrange the screens so they can both be seen but we choose to run NA (only for you, Dave!!) along with a mirror program which allows two computers to use the same program and each op can see what the other person is entering on his own screen. With that, there is no problem with duplicate numbers given out and, most of all, priority is given to the RUN station.

An additional aid is provided at each station: an alpha-numerical listing of every station we've worked in the last three years along with their check and section. The listing receives little use but can and does help with the weak ones. (Especially with the qrp category!)

40 percent of all our SS contacts come on 40 meters!! The 40 meter yagi is virtually put to rest for the weekend and the 40 dipole at 50 feet gets a workout. The 80 dipole gets a workout also although 80 has never been a 'super producer' for us. Twenty has been good but always with the 'stack.' Lower antenna ALWAYS toward the east and the upper antenna towards the west/southwest. Whatever you do, don't rule out 10 meters for those novices. We've found that pointing the antenna toward 6-land is the only way to go. If the band is open, you'll work a bunch. Finally, don't rule out 160!!! When things get slow Sunday evening, we send one station down on 160. In '87 we worked 118 stations on 160 Sunday night. In 3 out of 4 stations worked there, we were their FIRST contact. Being VERY LOUD and VERY FRIENDLY attracts a lot of people. The ZL special is our favorite antenna for stateside 160.

I know Dave, K8CC gave you some band breakdowns from his station running single-op. Here's what we've done in the past:

| | 1990 | 1989 | 1988* | 1987 |
|-----|------|------|-------|------|
| 160 | 55 | 18 | 152* | 118 |
| 75 | 162 | 288 | 263* | 208 |
| 40 | 758 | 481 | 849* | 657 |
| 20 | 576 | 147 | 727* | 426 |
| 15 | 53 | 66 | 115* | 101 |
| 10 | 171 | 365 | 268* | 88 |

* These scores were NEVER submitted as we ran multi/multi.

As you can see, 20 meters CAN and IS as vital as 40 meters. It's interesting to see our 1989 20 meter score. The upper antenna shorted hours before the contest leaving us with the fixed lower antenna.

When the contest begins, we like to stay off 40 meters as long as we can without rate suffering. Last year we made it for 2.5 hours on 20 and 10 before moving the 10 station to 40. Our rates averaged 100/hr for the first 8 hours. Supper comes at 8pm, one op at a time, and that's the only break we take the first evening until rate drops below 60/hr. That comes between 2 and

SWEEPSTAKES: THE MULTI APPROACH

Continued...

3 in the morning. We sleep for 4.5 hours and pick things up at about 6:30 am. The Sunday morning shot is a single effort (KN8R needs a few extra hours) until about 11am when both stations are up and running again. We take a half hour off in the afternoon for lunch and a whole hour around 5pm. That last hour off is a final rest for the last rush. We have a leisurely supper, relax in the living room and finalize our strategy.

I always keep a running line graph on the wall of the shack comparing rates of our last 5 SS efforts. We continually plot our hourly rates and note previous band changes. Sometimes the graph tells us which band to operate. If anything, we always have a focal point: to better the previous years' rate.

COMPUTER LOGGING ERGONOMICS

By Jim Stahl, K8MR

I am no doubt one of the last serious contesters to get into computer logging. I just purchased a real computer (to replace my C-64) this year at Dayton. As part of the family politics of buying the new computer it received a home in the living room, so as not to be classed a pure radio purchase. I finally hauled it downstairs to the shack for the August NA QSO Party. I set it up on the existing tabletop, admired the fact that I had joined the modern world, and decided that it would not be a very comfortable setup for a long contest.

Like every other shack I have seen, in real life or photos, the keyboard was on the front of the existing tabletop, with monitor and radio behind in their normal position 18" or so back from the front edge. The problem is that the keyboard is too high, requiring my shoulders to be scrunched up and my arms to be spread out chicken wing style to type on the keyboard. A lower keyboard position would be a big improvement.

The flash of inspiration came quickly. My operating table is a simple wooden top, rather than an office desk. Some time ago I had added a simple shelf under the front center for logs, the DX Edge, etc. I made a simple wooden frame to insert into this shelf to hold the keyboard, at a lower height and angled downward about 20 degrees for easier visibility. The frame is not attached to the table. It won't stand violent abuse,

but it can be easily removed when the computer returns to its upstairs home. The keyboard cable runs under the tabletop, via a supporting hook, to the computer which sits on the floor. The radio can be slid out to a few inches from the front edge of the table to minimize the keyboard to radio distance.

This keyboard position allows the shoulders to be dropped in a relaxed position, with elbows resting at the side of the body. The heel of the hands can rest on the front of the frame. The keyboard is also slightly farther from the eyes, which should be an additional advantage as we baby boomer contesters close in on the bifocal era.

Although I haven't done a contest with the old style arrangement, I'm convinced that this keyboard setup will make for a much more comfortable contest situation. If not, it will take about one CQ to put it away. Give it a try.

FROM THE TREASURER

By Ken Rogner, WD9INF

The current checkbook balance is \$369.69. The June and August Flash expenses amounted to \$107.71 and \$175 was sent off as a deposit for the Dayton Suite in April. Our current membership has 64 paid up for 1991. 9 of the 64 became NEW members within this past month. They include:

| | |
|-------|--------|
| Rik | VE3RIK |
| Ed | N8HHT |
| Rick | WX8T |
| Don | WA8OSE |
| Bob | WB8B |
| Steve | WD8O |
| Larry | K8NLD |
| Mike | N8JEC |
| Marty | N8DJR |

29 of the membership were present at the Findlay meeting. Highlights of the meeting included a SPECIAL presentation by Stan - AC8W (on behalf of Ted - 7J3ABO) to Hank - K8DD. Ted remembers Hank's unique trait to be VERY flatulent during contests. Hence, a SPECIAL headband in Japanese reading, "Divine Wind" was given to Hank. Listen for Hank in the next phone contest, " CQ CONTEST FROM KILOWATT EIGHT DIVINE wind DUCK!"

K8MR illustration

MRRC SWEEPSTAKES ELIGIBILITY

The ARRL rules for the Affiliated Club Competition specify that members wishing to submit scores for their club must attend two club meetings in the past twelve months. The rules for recent joiners is somewhat unclear - however, MRRC policy is that you must attend at least one meeting before you can submit a score for the club. Based on club records, here is each member's status as of October 1 - those of you who need to attend another meeting have yet another good reason to make the Columbus bash at K7EG.

TWO MEETINGS - ELIGIBLE TO SUBMIT A SCORE

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| AC8W | K3LA | K8CC | K8DD | K8MR | KC8MK | KE8OC | KN8Z | KO9Y |
| KU8E | KW8N | N0AON | N8ATR | N8CQA | N8CXX | N8DMM | N8ET | NU8Z |
| NZ4K | NZ8O | W8FN | W8IQ | W8UA | W8UPH | WB8WTS | WD8IJP | WD8IXE |
| WD8LLD | WD9INF | WI8W | | | | | | |

ONE MEETING - NEW MEMBER - ELIGIBLE TO SUBMIT A SCORE

| | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--|--|
| AF8A | K7EG | K8NLD | N8DJR | N8HTT | N8JEC | WX8T | | |
|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|--|--|

ONE MEETING - ANOTHER REQUIRED TO SUBMIT A SCORE

| | | | | | | | | |
|------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|------|------|
| K8JM | K8MJZ | KA8POW | KB8AIZ | KB8ECG | KC8EK | KE8FX | KN8S | N8EA |
| NA8V | W8WD | WB8VMN | WD8AUB | WI8L | WR8W | WU2B | | |

Mad River Radio Club
Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC
744 Foothill
Canton, MI 48188