



October/November 1992

Editor: Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC

### Let the Games Begin!

Hey folks, October is here, and that means the start of another CONTEST SEASON. Hopefully, the finishing touches have been put on this years station improvements, and we are ready to kick booty on the bands. We got CQWW phone coming up on October 24-25, ARRL SS CW on November 7-9, SS phone on November 21-23, and CQWW CW on November 28-29. All in all, a gruelling Schedule to keep, but someone's got to do it! Last year in the SS club competition, we came in fourth with 3.6 meg from 41 entries, a pretty good showing. This year we have a new goal in mind. The ARRL has instituted a Plaque program for SS, for which, MRRC has sponsored the Single-op low power category in both modes. Lets keep the plaques we paid for in the club. while we're at it lets get the high power plaques that North Coast sponsored too! Go for a sweep, and GO Mad River!

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### THE MAD RIVER RADIO CLUB

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### From the 'Big Fish'

By Steve Miller, WD8IXE

The days are getting shorter, the weather colder, and the trees aren't as green as they used to be. Yes, autumn is now and the contest season is nearly here. I've been tuning the HF bands from time to time and they are coming to life. Barring any untimely solar flares, conditions should be good enough for **Mad River** to post big scores!

September brought about some Mad River activity including the sprints, VHF contest, and the Findlay meeting. Activity in the phone sprint was somewhat lacking since several people went to N8ET's saturday evening get together. Thanks again to Bill and Tina for their hospitality. For those who couldn't make it, there was a little bit of everything. Great food, beer (even the Canadian variety thanks to Rik, VE3RIK), PacketCluster tinkering at the N8ET node, news of the revived KS8S contest station, and discussions on nearly every aspect of contesting including a K8CC description of WB8OHO's **40 meter quad!** I'd like to hear more about this antenna, what a monster!!!

There was an excellent turnout at the Findlay hamfest meeting and we managed to pick up a few new members. Not much news from the meeting, just a bunch of contesters rarin' to go at it this fall.

The hamfest was it's usual good self. I picked up some motorized 2-position coax switches to use someday. Dave, K8CC, wound up getting all kinds of stuff. A big KT34-XA was purchased for K8DD's station. I like it when MRRCers put up big antennas but **then there's Ted**, K8AQM, who has too many and was trying to get rid of some.

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

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## 'Big Fish' continued

I must admit Ted's 5 element 20m Hy-Gain was more than a little tempting ... maybe once I get a few acres out in the country ....

For those of you waiting for word on the Wooster-WD8LLD meeting, please be patient. Due to circumstances beyond Goose's control, we had to cancel the meeting slated for October 3rd. There is a chance this may be rescheduled in which case we'll try to get the word out. Check into the **3825 Monday night net** at 8PM for the latest news.

That's about all folks, I could go into a big long spiel trying to get everyone pumped up for the big contests but I won't. After spending all those hard earned \$\$\$ on radios, amplifiers, computers, antennas, etc. not to mention the umpteen hours of antenna work and honing contest skills, someone would have to be pretty silly to leave it all sit silent. **GET ON - MAKE POINTS!!!**

73, Steve, WD8IXE

## DXpedition to Hilton Head Island

by Jim Stahl K8MR

A sunspot cycle or so ago vacation meant for me packing up the radios and hopping an airplane to some warm island to operate a DX contest from the good end. That, however, was between wives and before children. Today vacation involves scheduling around school vacations and summer camp, and driving the family minivan. For the past few years the destination has been Hilton Head Island, an warm island with palm trees, albeit a half mile off the South Carolina mainland.

Also for the past sunspot cycle or so, I've been a casual participant in VHF contesting, playing around on 2 meter SSB with 10 watts. My move in 1987 to a 400 feet higher QTH helped my scores, but to improve my VHF scores the obvious plan was to add more bands. I had not been on 50 MHz since my high school days on AM in the mid sixties, but it seemed like the logical band to add to my present setup.

Last winter we decided that August in the Carolinas may be nice for the beach and swimming pool, but it is just too hot for land based activities such as tennis. The only other suitable time was just after school ended in June, which we decided to do. We reserved the same condo

we had stayed in the previous year for the second week of June.

## 'DXpedition' continued

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This just happened to be starting the Saturday of the June VHF QSO Party, which is the yearly highlight of six meter activity. The map of grid squares showed that Hilton Head's grid, EM-92, to be about half water, and include the city of Savannah and lots of sparsely inhabited land (at least compared to northeast Ohio). More important, it was the right distance for E-skip to New York, Chicago, and Texas. The condo, a two floor unit on a golf course with open space from northeast to southwest and with several trees nearby, seemed compatible with radio antennas. A plan was beginning.

Acquiring a six meter radio is not a trivial matter. One can go out and spend \$1500 or so for a top of the line ICOM or YAESU 28-50 MHz duobander, spend \$1500 for a middle grade HF transceiver with a 6M add-on, or find someone selling a 20 year old vacuum tube radio. I fortunately able to do the latter in the form of a TR-6 from K8MFO.

I picked up the radio in mid May. My wife had reacted negatively to previous interest in a different radio, so this one I carefully brought in when she wasn't around and set it on my radio table in the basement. I don't think she has to this day realized I acquired a new radio. But then she could buy lots of earrings that I would never notice either.

I then began working on antennas. When asked I said it was for Field Day. My first effort was with a PVC spreader 2 element quad. It had a fine SWR but was about 4 S-units below my PRO-67A HF antenna. I then proceeded to a simple dipole using the PVC for mechanical support. I could pull this one up a tree with a single string, and use a second string to rotate it 90 degrees. Signals were no worse than the quad, so I decided to keep it simple and take the dipole.

I used my position as chief minivan packer to see that the power supply went safely under the rear seat, the antennas at the bottom of the pile behind the rear seat, and the box with the TR-6 under other boxes and bags. It worked until we were repacking the first morning out after a stop at my sister's home in Pittsburgh. Linda asked what that unfamiliar box was, and I replied that it was some radio stuff. She grumbled about taking radio stuff on vacation, but asked no more and was told no more.

Saturday at 2pm, the starting time of the contest, we were about 40 miles from Hilton Head when I decided that explaining the contest could wait no longer. I said that the time spent would depend on conditions, but would not involve a round the clock operation, and that once the contest was over I could pack up the radios for the duration without complaining.

When we arrived the condo was not yet ready, so we went grocery shopping. At 4:30 we finally checked in and completely unloaded the van. I then quickly hooked the antenna to the rig in the 2nd floor bedroom but heard no signals so went to play tennis with Linda. After tennis she and the kids stayed at the pool, but I returned to put up the antenna.

Between golfers putting on the nearby green, I threw the weight and string about 25 feet into the closest tree, about 50 feet from our patio.

I pulled the coax to the patio, set up the TR-6 on a small glass table, and took a listen. Eureka, signals! I hastily hooked up a hand held mike, grabbed the logsheets (yes, paper!), and gave a call. VE2XX came back and I was on my way. I called a few more guys, and then found a frequency and started CQing, and actually had people coming back. The northeast from Maryland north was booming in, along with Texans and the upper midwest. The pileups were not to be confused with Caribbean pileups in a DX test, but I was working folks.

Linda and the kids meanwhile returned and fixed supper. I avoided going inside to eat, so had shrimp and corn on the cob between logging in the QSOs. I also hooked up the keyer (the famous K8MR random dot-dash generator) and had surprising success on code, with perhaps 50 qsos, including a lot of new grids. The band stayed good until 11 pm or so, when there were still signals coming in though many calls to midwestern stations were ignored in favor of W0's and 7's that I couldn't hear a trace of. I was up about 7 am Sunday morning. I heard some of the big guns in the northeast on scatter, and also some 5's and 0's on skip. I worked several Caribbean stations including HH2PV, KP2A, KP4BZ, 6Y5IC, and KA3B\VP5. Linda dragged me to the tennis court at 9am for an hour. When I returned the northeast was coming in, which gave me 40-45 per hour rates for a few hours. It was a very directional opening, with nothing west of about Rochester, NY. I kept at it through the early afternoon though the band became worked out and never did open to the

midwest. By late afternoon it was down to a few signals on the band, and it never got any better. My last 2 QSOs were at 2014 and 2200Z.

I finished with 263 QSOs in 90 grids. It turns out that this was probably the best 6M opening in several years. WB0DRL in Kansas reported just over 1000 QSOs on 6. My QSOs were geographically uneven: 80 1's and 60 2's, but just 20 8's and 10 9's. The black hole does exit! Only 6 qsos were on groundwave. My results may not have been spectacular, but it was fun passing out a relatively scarce grid. (There was a station in Savannah on passing out QSOs from the same grid, so I wasn't totally rare.)

About 9 am Monday I glanced out the bedroom window and saw a truck parked on the golf course path and a guy pulling a bundle of coax toward our patio. The dipole and the strings to support and steer it were gone. I decided I didn't really want to talk to this guy, so I let him proceed uninterrupted. He left the coax outside the door and left. Maybe he was a spy from Cushcraft, but I guess they just don't like antennas in their trees! But I didn't want to be told that, as I may be back next year, same time, same place. See you!

### **Pot Pourri of CT tips for the Contest** by N3RD

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Here are some tips for using CT in the contest, in no particular order, and not necessarily all you need to know!

**RENAME AUTOEXEC.BAT AND CONFIG.SYS:**  
I have heard various reports that funny things happen when users try to load CT Version 8. My recommendation is that before contest time, you rename AUTOEXEC.BAT to AUTOEXEC.SAV and CONFIG.SYS to CONFIG.SAV, and reboot your computer. The funny things should not happen any more. You might want to construct a minimum AUTOEXEC.BAT which contains the SET CTPATH statement, as well as any other minimum requirements. Definitely dump Windows and any TSRs which are not contest related.

**SET COMPUTER CLOCK TO UTC:** CT Version 7 and its predecessors allowed you to keep your computers clock on EST or EDST and have CT make the adjustment. With Version 8, you MUST set your computers clock to UTC. It is best to do this in the CMOS setup routine, and forget. I also recommend that you obtain and use the utility

called CLOCK, which keeps your computer's clock in very close alignment with WWV. By all means, verify before the contest that both your date and time are correct, or you will be in for a heap of trouble after the contest trying to straighten things out!

**UPDATE YOUR CQWW.CTY FILE:** The file you used in the contest last year is out of date, and needs updating. Remember to add the new countries created by the split up of Yugoslavia. Make sure that you count 4U1VIC. Check the packet system for messages listing the needed changes. During the contest, you can type 4J4=UG if you forgot to add 4J4 to the list of prefixes for UG. However, you can not ADD a new country to the list. you will have to quit CT and fix the country file, or fix it at the end of the contest. I recommend spending some time before the contest buffing up the file.

**BATCH FILES:** Who hasn't had to re-boot during a contest? Happens to the best of us. Batch files are a handy way to quickly get yourself going after a crash or restart. At N3RS, we construct a batch file called GO.BAT containing something like the following:

```
CD CT
COMTSR1
COMTSR2
DVPTSR
CT386 CQSSB -D -NOW
```

Just typing the word go and hitting <ENTER> results in loading all the necessary TSRs and launching CT using the -D(enable SuperCheckPartial) and -NOW("no wait", ie. bypass all the menus features.

**FILES:** Although CT comes with many files which are necessary to run all the various contests, only a small handful are really needed to operate in a contest. The required files are:

| Machine | Ver.7 and Earlier   | Ver. 8   |
|---------|---------------------|--|
| 8086    | CT.EXE,<br>CQWW.CTY | CT86.EXE,<br>COMTSRx,<br>CQWW.CTY              |
| 80286   | CT.EXE,<br>CQWW.CTY | CT286.EXE,<br>ZPM.EXE,<br>COMTSRx,<br>CQWW.CTY |
| 80386   | CT.EXE,<br>CQWW.CTY | CT386.EXE,<br>COMTSRx,<br>CQWW.CTY             |

Useful optional files are CT.hlp and MASTER.DTA. Be sure to use MASTER.DTA, the hard disk based SuperCheckPartial database, not MASTER.DAT, the memory based version. .DAT takes away from your available space for contacts. The latest and greatest MASTER.DTA file is available from K3WW by sending him a formatted 1.2MB 5 1/4 inch floppy or 1.44MB 3 1/2 inch floppy in a self addressed stamped floppy mailer.

**MEMORY:** Version 7 and earlier of CT looks for EXPANDED memory in your computer. If you have an expanded memory plug-in card, you can gain access to this memory from within any of these earlier versions. Also, a 286/386 machine equipped with a software driver called an expanded memory manager, can be used to get more space for QSOs. The software driver usually has to be provided with your motherboard, and sometimes DIP switches have to be set on the motherboard to allow the driver to work. Version 8 of CT is somewhat different in that only CT86 looks for EXPANDED memory. CT286 and CT386 use EXTENDED memory. In fact, CT386 will not run unless there is at least 1MB of extended available for it. CT286 uses ZPM.EXE DOS extender to access extended memory.

**DVP:** Read the excellent brochure provided by K1EA Software. Record your CQs and 59 05s the weekend before. If you are a multi-op, don't forget to type OPON before recording your CQs, to allow different voices for each operator.

**TEST IT OUT!:** The most important advice I can give is this. Completely test out your contest setup the weekend before the contest. Enter QSOs, test the packet interface, make sure you have adequate QSO capacity , etc. This gives you a whole week to figure out why it doesn't work right. But don't call me with your questions. I'll be in Bermuda!

73, Dave N3RD.

[ Reprinted from the October 1992 edition of The Frankford Radio Club Newsletter. Although some of the references in the article are localized to the originating club, most of this is useful information. - Ed.]

## The 1992-93 Mad River Radio Club Championship

By Jeff Clarke KU8E

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This past January during the K8MR New Year's meeting a proposal was made to have a club championship (similar to that of the NCJ USA Single Operator Championship run by KM9P) to recognize the contest efforts our members make throughout the year. The credit for this idea should go to K8MR who is the author. I have volunteered to administer the program at this time.

The rules that we will use in running the championship for the 1992-93 are subjected to change. If you have any suggestions on what the rules should be, please by all means let me know!

### Rules for the 1992-93 MRRC Championship

1) The purpose of the Mad River Radio Club Championship is to give recognition to members of the club for their contest efforts during the year. It is also to be used as an incentive to encourage members to get on the air during contests and to contribute to the Mad River Radio Club aggregate score. (when applicable)

2) The scoring system that is used will be the same that is used in the NCJ USA Single Operator Championship. The points awarded to you in each contest you enter will be your final score percentage of the winning single operator unassisted score for the continental USA. This percentage is multiplied by the maximum points allowed for the particular contest giving the points that you have earned.

For example, the top single op unassisted score for the 1991 CQWW CW contest, in October CQ magazine, is KM1H with 4,969,248 points. K8GL was tops in Mad River with 2,050,081. Dividing Greg's score by the top score we see that his score is 41% of the KM1H score. Multiplying .41 times 1000 (the maximum number of points that can be earned for CQWW CW) the number of points K8GL earns for CQWW CW is 410 points.

3) Multi-op scores : The scoring used for multi-ops is a little more complicated. (I am open for suggestions) The total score will be divided by number of operators, plus an extra share for the station owner. Each operator's points will then be figured using the formula used above for single operator stations.

For example, WD8LLD was multi-single in 1991 CQWW with 6 operators and a score of 2,522,539. As station owner WD8LLD will get an extra share which at this time we have decided will be 1/3 of the final score. Multiplying the WD8LLD score times 1/3 gives 840,846 which is divided by the KM1H score and multiplied by 1000. This means Goose gets 169.2 points. The remainder of the WD8LLD score is divided among the other operators. This means the other operators get 67.6 points each. (I will leave the math on this example to you) On the request of the station owner the allocation of the score will be changed. (for an example an operator who only operates an hour or two)

4) Single operator assisted counts the same as unassisted. DXpedition scores count in the same manner as stateside scores, referenced to the winning stateside score, though only the maximum contest point value may be earned.

5) Scores must be credited to the Mad River Radio Club when there is a club aggregate competition NA sprints not included)

6) The following contests will be used in determining the 1992-93 winner (with maximum points that can be earned listed) :

| Contest                    | Maximum Points    |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1992 CQWW SSB              | 1000              |
| 1992 ARRL SS (CW)          | 1000              |
| 1992 ARRL SS (SSB)         | 1000              |
| 1992 CQWW CW               | 1000              |
| 1993 ARRL DX (SSB)         | 1000              |
| 1993 ARRL DX (CW)          | 1000              |
| 1992 ARRL 160M CONTEST     | 750 <             |
| 1992 ARRL 10M CONTEST      | 750 <             |
| 1993 CQ 160 (CW)           | 750 <             |
| 1993 CQ 160 (SSB)          | 750 < Best 4 of 7 |
| 1993 CQ WPX (SSB)          | 750 <             |
| 1993 CQ WPX (CW)           | 750 <             |
| 1993 IARU HF CHAMPIONSHIP  | 750 <             |
| JAN. 1993 NAQP (CW)        | 200 <             |
| JAN. 1993 NAQP (SSB)       | 200 <             |
| FEB. 1993 NA SPRINT (CW)   | 200 <             |
| FEB. 1993 NA SPRINT (SSB)  | 200 < Best 5 of 8 |
| AUG. 1993 NAQP (CW)        | 200 <             |
| AUG. 1993 NAQP (SSB)       | 200 <             |
| SEPT. 1993 NA SPRINT (CW)  | 200 <             |
| SEPT. 1993 NA SPRINT (SSB) | 200 <             |

7) An annual award will be awarded to each year's winner.

## Score Rumors

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### CW SPRINT

|         |     |        |        |
|---------|-----|--------|--------|
| KW8N261 | 45  | 11,745 |        |
| K8MR    | 247 | 46     | 11,362 |
| WD8IXE  | 241 | 46     | 11,086 |
| W8FN222 | 44  | 9,768  |        |
| WD8LLD  | 194 | 41     | 7,954  |
| WD8AUB  | 177 | 41     | 7,257  |
| K8DD    | 171 | 37     | 6,327  |
| AA8AV   | 114 | 33     | 3,762  |
| AF8A    | 104 | 34     | 3,536  |

### SSB SPRINT

|         |    |        |  |
|---------|----|--------|--|
| KW8N317 | 53 | 16,801 |  |
|---------|----|--------|--|

### SEPT. VHF QSO PARTY

|              |     |     |       |
|--------------|-----|-----|-------|
| K8MFO+WD8AUB | 365 | 180 | ROVER |
| K8MR         | 121 | 59  |       |

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