



The

# FLASH



The Official Newsletter of the Mad River Radio Club

April/May 1994

## MRRC CALENDAR Dayton Hamvention APRIL 29 - MAY 1

Friday 1:00 - 4:00 PM

- *Antenna Forum*

Friday 7:00 PM - 1:00 AM

- *MRRC Hospitality Suite at Stouffers*

Saturday 12:00 PM

- *MRRC Meeting in Hara Arena*

Saturday 1:00 PM

- *Contest Forum*

Saturday 7:00 PM - 1:00 AM

- *MRRC Hospitality Suite at Stouffers*

## From the 'Big Fish'

By Steve Miller, WD8IXE

Greetings fellow contesters! Dayton is upon us and the boilers are stoked for maximum steam on the MRRC railroad. In fact, significant pressure has already been attained as evidenced by the events on the April 11th MRRC Monday Night Net. On that night, **Ken, WD9INF**, inquired (in a somewhat naive manner) about front-running prospects for electing the next 'Big Fish'. In a flash of MRRC efficiency, Ken was nominated, seconded, and unanimously elected **right there on 3828 KHz!!** Unfortunately, after consulting Robert's Rules of Order, I must declare Ken's election to the post of Big Fish on 11 April 1994 null and void since an official club meeting was not properly called to order. I suspect that by the time the official Dayton meeting arrives, the MRRC electoral railroad may be reaching supersonic velocities. It is difficult to predict who will be caught in its path, although I expect Ken to arrive early for the meeting to best posture his defensive position.

Plans for this year's **MRRC Dayton Hospitality Suite** are well underway. **Mike, AA8FE** has been hard at work and has found two commercial sponsors to help offset the cost of the suite. There are still a few bartending slots which need to be filled - be sure to sign up with Mike. Everyone is **strongly encouraged** to bring station/operator photos, videos, banners, or other items for display. It would be great to show other contesters and DXers what MRRC is all about.

Results of the ARRL 160 contest once again had several MRRC stations post excellent scores. The multi-op category saw MRRC sweep the top four spots in the "Central Region" with the **KN8Z, WR8C, AA8U** and **WD9INF** crews finishing in 3rd, 4th, 7th and 8th place respectively. **Ken, AA8AV**, again gutted out a single op from **K8CC** for a Top Ten slot (3rd in the Central Region). We managed to break the one million point barrier with on **nine entries**. It should be noted that MRRC averaged over 125K per entry compared to 51K for the winning club, FRC. The Southeast DX Club (who had the second highest average score per entry) has only 114K per entry - I wonder how the ARRL missed this in their contest analysis? The MRRC average score per entry would have been much higher if the 'Big Fish' had not turned in his **extraordinary 108 point effort**. P.S. - I think the new regional format used in the ARRL 160 results for the top scores really stinks.

Elsewhere, **Barry, KF8TY** piloted **WD8LLD** to a #1 USA finish in the 20M single band category in the CQ WPX SSB Contest, more than doubling the second place score. The "ugly" crew at **AA8U** also had a great WPX showing with a #2 USA multi-single finish.

After serving two years as 'Big Fish', I've decided to let a new voice exert their influence as the leader of Mad River, particularly before someone figures out that the MRRC inflation rate was 140% this last year. In all seriousness, my tenure as 'Big Fish' has given me the opportunity to learn more about our club and its members. There have been many excellent MRRC scores these past two years, and **we even managed to win a gavel**. I take great pride in being associated with MRRC, and hope the membership gives the next 'Big Fish' as much support as I was given. I would like to thank the MRRC officers, and everyone who helped at the hospitality suites, hosted meetings, ordered badges, manned the MRRC flea market tables and engaged in other activities to support and promote MRRC.

See you all in the stands about the Cushcraft booth - all aboard...

73, Steve, WD8IXE

## NEXT MRRC MEETING

The next meeting of the Mad River Radio Club will be on Saturday, April 30, 1994 at 12:00 Noon at the Dayton Hamvention in the stands of the Hara Ice Arena immediately above the Cushcraft exhibit. Everyone should plan to attend to vote on officers and meeting dates for 1994-95.

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- ☆ The *FLASH* is the official newsletter of the **Mad River Radio Club**, ☆
- ☆ and is published six times per year in even-numbered months. ☆
- ☆ Submissions of material for the *FLASH* are welcome, and may be ☆
- ☆ sent to the editor at the address of the last page. ☆
- ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
- ☆ The Mad River Radio Club is an ARRL-affiliated club of amateur ☆
- ☆ radio contesting enthusiasts. The club area is centered on Findlay, ☆
- ☆ OH, and serves the surrounding states. Membership in the MRRC ☆
- ☆ is open to anyone. Dues are \$7 per year. ☆
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- ☆ In addition to six in-person meetings per year, MRRC has an ☆
- ☆ informal net every Monday evening at 8:30 PM Eastern time on ☆
- ☆ 3825 KHz ± QRM. Everyone is welcome to check in for the latest ☆
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## From The Editor

By Dave Pruett, K8CC



Boy, do I hate April! Every year, its crunch time - gotta do my income taxes, get a new version of *NA* ready to go, crank out a *Flash...* arrrrgh! Its a good thing I love this hobby or it would surely drive me nuts! Nonetheless, I got my taxes done, and I'm ready to single-handedly boost our economy with my Dayton spending.

It seems like we just did an issue (the February/March issue was late), but this one is pretty much out on time due to Dayton. My thanks to **Jim, K8MR** for his score collecting and contributions of witty repartee, and also to **Mike, AA8FE**, who wrote up and printed the Dayton Suite announcement. Other than that, there were **NO** submissions from the membership for this, our flagship issue for the Dayton Hamvention. Shame on you...

Dayton should be a blast again this year. The usual array of forums (Antennas, Contest, and DX) will inform and provide a place to sit during the day, while the MRRC Hospitality Suite will be in high gear both nights. Speaking of the Suite, **AA8FE** managed to enlist the support of two Hanvention vendors to help offset the cost of the suite. At press time, **Michigan Radio** from Detroit and **K3LR's LTA** have both agreed to help out in the \$\$\$ department. Advertisements for both will be available in the Suite - you might want to consider these vendors if their wares fit into your purchasing plans for 1994.

You might notice the CQ WPX score from **KG8BZ** in the listings on this page. This was a first-time multi-multi effort from the station of MRRC member **Jeff Benson, N8CC**. All the operators had a blast, and the station survived, albeit with some quick equipment repair. Boy, am I glad they didn't use Jeff's callsign...

73, Dave, K8CC

## DAYTON AGENDA ITEMS

### CLUB ARTWORK

You may have noticed that the newsletter masthead contains an attempt at second-generation club artwork. The original artwork (which adorns our club clothing paraphenalia) was created a number of years ago under the reign of 'Big Fish' **WU2B**. The map showed the club circle centered on Marion, OH, reflecting the geography of the membership at that time. Much has changed in MRRC in the intervening years, and not too long ago the center of the circle was moved to Findlay, OH. Realizing that the artwork needed updating, **Tim, KE8OC** took on the task to redraw the artwork accurately portraying the new club center and limits of the circle. (It also provided an excellent opportunity to exercise his new 486DX/2-66 computer!) Megathanks to Tim for his efforts, and we will be voting on the new artwork at the Dayton meeting.

### MRRC MEETING DATES FOR 1994/95

The following schedule is proposed for MRRC meetings in 1994/95:

Dayton Hamvention	Last weekend in April '94
KN8Z Party	1st weekend in August '94
Findlay Hamfest	2nd weekend in September '94
Fall MI meeting	3rd weekend in October '94
K8MR Party	2nd weekend in January '95
Winter MI meeting	3rd weekend in March '95

Plan to come to the Dayton meeting to vote on these items.

## MRRC Club Scores

### CO 160M SSB

KG8CO	780-61	105K	
K8MR	349-47	37K	
NBATR	991-66	148K	Multi-op
WD9INF	962-67	144K	+KN8R, KG8CW

### CO WPX SSB

WD9INF	594-350	501K	
NT8V	520-347	440K	
N8CQA	250-182	106K	QRP
N8ET	14-14	0.5K	
K8MR	124-111	0.0K	
KG8BZ	1436-647	1.7M	multi-multi • N8CC QTH +K8AQM, KG8CO

**Jim, K8MR** is the official club scorekeeper. If you're going to use the USPS, send the score to Jim. Also, If you can get into the Ohio PacketCluster system, send the score to Jim. If you are connected to the Great Lakes PacketCluster System (which covers MI and NW OH), send your score to **K8CC**.

Of course, a much better alternative is to turn in the score live on the MRRC net on Monday evenings, 8:30 Eastern Time on 3825 KHz.

de **K8MR** and **K8CC**

## Second Annual Dayton Contest Dinner

Sponsored by NCC, FRC, YCCC & MRRC

When: Saturday, April 30, 1994 at 6:30PM (bar opens at 5:30)

Location: Stouffer Center Plaza Hotel  
Van Cleve Ballroom  
Fifth and Jefferson Streets  
Dayton, OH

Menu: House salad, potato and vegetables, rolls, grilled skinless chicken breast, New York style cheesecake.

Cost: \$25 per person

Seating is limited to 300 maximum. Tim Duffy, K3LR will have a limited number of tickets available at the Antenna Forum, or at the LTA Booth (#213) at the Hamvention.

## It's 1977 again!

The prospect of being able to select one's callsign for the first time in 18 years has many MRRC members eagerly following the FCC news releases, awaiting the official announcement. Here are a few rumors of choices to be asked for:

WD8LLD	to	WD8LID
WD9INF	to	WD8INF
KA8D	to	WA8D
K8MR	to	K8MRS
N8ATR	to	W8KG
N8DMM	to	W8QL
WU8A	to	W8UA
W8UA	to	WU8A
KW8N	to	NW8K
NZ8O	to	N486DX
KN8Z	to	W8MZ or K8RZ

Good luck everyone, and have those 610 forms ready!

## THE DX RAG CHEWERS CENTURY CLUB AWARD

Have you ever had that feeling that something was at least a little bit stupid about sitting for hours in a rare DX pileup for the chance that the guy might come back to you to say "59 QSL QRZ"? Do you think rag chewing is something only for retired people in Florida describing their most recent doctor visit?

Well, you're not alone. So in an effort to put substance and challenge into these two of the most popular ham activities, the ARRL is pleased to announce the joining of two long time award programs to create a new award, the DX Rag Chewers Century Club, or DXRCCC. This will be earned by engaging in a minimum 30 minute QSO with amateurs in at least 100 different DXCC countries.

Initially there will only be a simple mixed mode award, though single mode and band and five band endorsements may be considered at a future date.

Credit for QSOs for DXRCCC will require QSLs showing both start and end time of the QSO. Furthermore, verification in the form of audio recordings may be required at the discretion of the DXRCCC administrator. QSOs involving more than two amateurs will require an additional 30 minutes for each amateur beyond two, i.e. a 4 person qso would require 90 minutes to be eligible for DXRCCC credit. The audio tapes would likely be required for multi-person QSOs in order to determine that the person seeking credit was appropriately involved in the QSO.

The DXRCCC has received corporate backing from an unusual sponsor. In recognition of the hurdles involved in combining these two seemingly diametrically opposed activities, Miller Brewing (who brings us those great Miller Lite commercials like Luge Bowling and Big Time Lawyer Rodeos) has agreed to establish a special fund to assist in sending world class rag chewers along on major DXpeditions. Hams willing to travel and able to ramble on in spite of tropical heat, polar cold, or political turmoil will be sought to pass out DXRCCC qsos from rare corners of the earth.

A Miller spokesman said the combining of "Less Filling" DXing and the "Tastes Great" rag chewing was a marriage made in marketing heaven, and expressed confidence that Miller's move into the lucrative amateur "cold 807" market will provide good returns to the company in addition to good will from the amateur community.

As thousands of DXers have reached the very highest levels of the DXCC honor roll there have been many suggestions put forth to restart the program or add various endorsements. There also has been disillusionment with the low level of skill and effort required for DXCC in these days of DX nets and PacketCluster spotting systems. At the same time, rag chewers have been complaining about getting no respect from obnoxious DXpeditions and contests. The DXRCCC responds to these concerns and aims to provide the recognition and incentive for both groups. Good hunting and may you have many enjoyable conversations!

The starting date for DXRCCC QSOs is April 1. Please do not send cards or tapes until further details are announced.

(From the K8MR News Service)

### DON'T FORGET!

We need YOUR article for the next MRRC Flash - start working NOW on an article!

Deadline for publication: **JUNE 1, 1994**

## Buying a Logging Computer

By Dave Pruett, K8CC

With Dayton right around the corner, now is the time to consider buying or upgrading a logging computer for the ham shack. Logging software gets better with every release, although sometimes it takes a better computer to see the benefit. However, if you haven't checked recently, your computer dollar goes a long way in today's market. Dayton's plethora of vendors offers a great opportunity to get just what you need at a steal.

If you already have a logging computer, buying just the pieces to upgrade your old machine makes sense. Otherwise, if you're looking for an entire computer, you'll probably get a better deal buying a complete system from one of the vendors.

There are five areas to consider in buying a logging computer:

**CPU TYPE** - There is no place else where your computer dollars make more improvement in performance than the computer "brain" or CPU. My recommendation is not to buy anything less than a 386 CPU, to get lots of computing power and powerful memory management capabilities. Right now, you can get a 40 MHz 386DX motherboard for around \$100, which is a great deal. However, my favorites are the motherboards using the 40 MHz Cyrix 486DLC. This chip is essentially the same as an Intel 486 without the math co-processor (which provides no benefit for logging anyways). 486DLC motherboards are typically around \$170.

**MEMORY** - You should have at least 1 MB of RAM on your computer, or 2 MB minimum if you want to run the new CT. Typically, the choice is 1 MB or 4 MB due to the way memory is arranged, and I recommend buying 4 MB which will cost an extra \$100. You can use the memory to hold extra QSOs, or run a disk cache to speed up your hard disk, or maybe get one of the internal voice keyers like a *DVP* or *VoiceBlaster*.

**HARD DISK** - None of the contest logging programs hog disk space, so just about anything will do. (My two dedicated logging computers plus my PacketCluster get along fine with 40 MB drives.) If you're gonna put all of your thousands of QSOs on the computer, you might want to consider a larger hard disk. Plan on paying less than \$1 per megabyte. Also, don't get hung up with floppy drives - they exist only to get files onto or off of the computer. Pick a size (3½ preferred) and go with it.

**SERIAL & PARALLEL PORTS** - It seems like you can never have too many ports on a logging computer, particularly in a multi-op setting. Even a single op might want to connect a digital radio, TNC, CW keying and a printer, so right there are two serial and two parallel ports. Most port I/O cards have two serials and a parallel - buy two and all your needs will be met. Note: be sure at least one of the cards can be set up as COM3 & COM4, with IRQs other than 4 and 3.

**MONITOR** - It seems like most contesters scrimp when it comes time to buy a monitor, when in reality it is one of the most important parts of the logging system. Think about it - you're staring at the monitor a large part of the time while operating, so why not get one that looks good? Color makes a world of difference in the display of data, so decide right now to take the plunge. What you want is a 14" or 15" VGA monitor, 0.28 mm dot pitch, 1024 x 768 resolution non-interlaced. My suggestion is to always ask to see the monitor in operation, because there are some really poor monitors around. If you stick with the specifications listed above, you should get a decent monitor for under \$300.

There are some other minor recommendations. At K8CC, I prefer to have my computers (I have *seven*) in tower cases. The mini-towers can be mounted beneath the operating desk and out of the way.

I used to prefer the old-style keyboards with the function keys on the left, but I have been won over by the 101 keyboards with function keys on the top. There is a small IBM keyboard available that saves valuable space on the operating desk - keep an eye out for one.

Hopefully, these notes are useful - good luck in your buying spree!

## Treasurer's Report

By Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC



Over the past year, we had to make some serious decisions concerning on the state of the MRRC club treasury. Faced with increasing demands on our resources, an increase in the annual dues from \$7 to \$12 was approved at the 1993 MRRC meeting at KN8Z, effective with the start of the 1994 fiscal year. We believe that MRRC is now on financially solid ground and will be able to meet its obligations. The following is a summary of the 1993 financial dealings of the Mad River Radio Club:

<b>Balance forward from 1992</b>	<b>\$391.65</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Total dues income	\$605.00
Dayton Suite proceeds	\$360.00
Findlay Table Income	\$127.00
Misc donation	\$5.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1097.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
1992 <i>Flash</i> production expenses	\$150.00
1992 & 1993 Dayton Suite expenses	\$590.64
1994 Dayton Suite Deposit	\$175.00
Checking Account Maintenance	\$29.95
1993 <i>Flash</i> production expenses	\$230.00
ARRL Contest Plaques	\$150.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1325.59</b>
<b>Balance forward to 1994</b>	<b>\$163.06</b>

Respectfully Submitted, Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC

## Dayton 1994

### Forums of Interest to Contesters

#### Antenna Forum - 1:00 PM Friday

Moderators: K3LR & WR3G

- Antenna Basics & More: W7EL
- All the Right Angles at All the Right Times: K3NA
- Performance of Antennas over Irregular Terrain: WA3FET
- Study of Long Path Propagation at 28 MHz: K9LA
- Installation Hints for Constructing Towers - W0UN
- New Developments on 80M DX Antennas, plus The Design and Construction of a Full Size 40M Yagi: ON4UN and ON6WU

#### Contest Forum - 1:30 PM Saturday

Moderators: K1DG and WZ1R

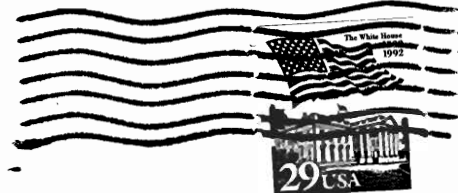
- Building a World-Class Multi-Multi in the Pacific Northwest (again): W7RM
- The P40L Story: Two Guys, Two Rigs, and a QSO Every eight seconds: KR0Y, N5RZ
- The KN8Z Contest Station - Fort Sheller, Ohio
- Contesting in the Black Hole: WB0O
- Genetic Engineering in Station Design - Cloning K1EA: KC1XX and K1EA
- G0KPW - The Stealth Multi-Multi of the UK: G4BUO

#### Editor's Note:

MRRC's own J. R. "Doc" Sheller, DDS, aka KN8Z is on the docket to showcase his magnificent station. Let's all turn out and show support for Doc.



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