



The

FLASH



The Official Newsletter of the Mad River Radio Club

February / March 1996

Treasurer's Report

By Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC



Not much to report this month as we wind down towards the end of the MRRC fiscal year. We are in pretty good shape, with only a couple of *FLASH* printings and checking account maintenance charges left to cover. Remember too, that the Dayton Suite deposit is already paid. Thanks to everyone for their support this year.

Balance reported 12/95	\$215.32
Income	
Dues received	\$24.00
Expenses	
Checking Account Maint. (Jan-Mar)	\$9.00
Balance 3/96	\$230.32

Respectfully Submitted, Tim O'Sullivan, KE8OC

From the 'Big Fish'

By Goose Steingass, WD8LLD

Hello MRRC members! First of all, Happy New Year! It seems that all us managed to get through the December and January snow storms OK. I haven't heard of any major antenna damage which is good. Just think, a couple more months and we will be getting some warm wx and can all start building antennas or doing tower work again.

Some congratulations are in order with regard to the Fall Sprints. **Dave, K8CC** and **Doug, WD8AUB** (operating at W0CG) made the top ten box in qsos in the NCJ CW Sprint. In addition, **Bob, KW8N** made the top ten box for qsos in the Phone Sprint. Congratulations guys! Our scores are getting better and better as we all get older and more seasoned. In case you haven't seen the NCJ, our MRRC Team #1 team finished fourth in the CW Sprint and the MRRC Team finished fifth in the Phone Sprint.

Now that we are in the first part of the year it's time to start thinking about the Dayton Suite. As you are probably all aware by now, the Hamvention Committee in its infinite wisdom has moved the Hamvention to the middle of May this year. This has caused a major conflict in the WD8LLD household as this is the same weekend as our oldest son Matt (aka KB8CMK) is graduating from college. Although I will be able to make the Hamvention for the meeting on Saturday, I will not be able to take charge of running the suite this year as I will have to leave to drive to Valparaiso, IN right after the meeting on Saturday. Fortunately, **Jeff, KU8E**, has volunteered to step forward and be the suite captain. This is dependent on his work schedule that weekend so he will need to have lots of help to get things in motion.

I would like to ask the entire membership to please step in and help make the suite a success this year. I know that all of us like to visit all the suites during the Friday and Saturday evening festivities, but please think about the club too. Giving two hours to man the bar will still allow you time to visit all the other suites and say hello to all your friends. Besides, when you are at the bar they probably will make their way to you when they need a refreshment! So please think of your club. Pitch in and give us a hand. I will help Jeff by taking care of getting the bartending slots filled. You can get in touch with me by e-mail, regular mail, or the net to let me know what shift you can take. Your help will be very much appreciated.

At the K8MR Christmas party we also discussed the reporting of scores for the various contests that we enter during the year. It seems that we are having trouble at times getting the scores to **Jim, K8MR**, our official scorekeeper. Those of you that are trying to report to Jim via packet from Michigan need to be aware that there are some problems with the link from Cleveland to Toledo. It is still not yet operating with a high degree of reliability. Please don't send your scores to K8CC. Try e-mail to Jim or the good old fashioned way via the USPS. If you want to get them there fast without spending the 32 cents for a stamp, just check into the net on Monday nite and give them to Jim. He is there almost every week. Lately we have been meeting on 1872.5 due to propagation on 3830. So look for us on either of those two frequencies.

Well, I have rambled on long enough. We'll see you in the next *FLASH!*

73, de Goose, WD8LLD
gooster@delphi.com



Due to the rescheduling of the Dayton Hamvention, there is no MRRC meeting during the period of this newsletter. The next issue will be the Dayton issue, with details of MRRC activities during the Hamvention weekend.

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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 \$12 per year, payable to club ☆
- ☆ treasurer KE8OC. Please make checks out to Tim O'Sullivan. ☆
- ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
- ☆ 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 ☆
- ☆ club news and information. ☆
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From The Editor

By Dave Pruett, K8CC

You've probably been wondering - "WHERE IS THE *FLASH*?" The Feb/March issue seems to be the hardest to get out on time, coming as it does during the middle of the Winter portion of the contest season. We were on track to meet the deadline - then life threw me a curve ball...



I came home from the SE Michigan DX Association meeting the Friday before the CW Sprint to find a message on my answering machine from my mother in Florida saying that I needed to call her immediately. I returned her call right away (11:45 PM) but with no answer. The next morning, my brother (WB8VMN) informed me that my father had suffered a mild heart attack and was in a hospital in Orlando. Tom said that Dad was resting comfortably, but that tests to determine what they would do next would not happen until Monday. Trying to reach either of my parents at the hospital was not successful, so I spent Saturday getting ready to participate on the MRRC team in the CW Sprint. At 0215Z during the Sprint, my father called from his hospital bed. My first reaction was to tell him I was operating a contest, but in an instant I realized what was truly important and spent the next 45 minutes on the phone with him. After we hung up, I was not in the right attitude to return to the radio, so the big switch was thrown.

Tests on Monday revealed that my dad was suffering from arterial blockage which caused the heart attack. Initially, the doctors were inclined to perform angioplasty, or "balloon therapy", to clear the blockage. However, Tuesday evening it was decided his condition was quite serious, and the doctors elected to perform a triple-bypass the next morning. My mother asked me to come down immediately, so the next morning I was on a Northwest flight to Orlando along with all the happy Midwestern vacationers.

You may be wondering what all this has to do with amateur radio contesting. Well, at this point ARRL DX CW was only two days away and I had eight guys planning on showing up to operate the contest. ARRL DX CW is probably my favorite contest, and the K8CC multi-multis are the high points of the contest season for me. I really did not want to miss the contest, so I scheduled my return flight for early Friday morning. However, once I got to Florida and saw how much my family needed me down there, I decided to stay through the weekend and miss the contest.

I want to thank the K8CC multi-multi crew for their understanding in cancelling at the last minute. I also want to thank **Tim, KE8OC** for making some of the calls to the crew when I did not have my MRRC roster with me in Florida.

One thing that makes editing the newsletter easier is if I have stuff to print. This month's *FLASH* has several items gleaned from the contest-related Internet reflectors which I believe you will find interesting.

I suppose everyone is aware that the 1996 Dayton Hamvention will be in mid-May rather than its traditional late-April weekend. This gives us some additional time to put together the April-May issue which will be the Hamvention issue. Please get your stuff to me by mid-April, and I intend to get the issue in your hands the first week of May.

W8WD and I are going to Visalia in a few weeks. We'll try to bring back lots of good stories from the West Coast.

73, Dave, K8CC
dap14@infoctr.chrysler.com

DON'T FORGET!

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

Deadline for publication: **APRIL 15, 1996**

Errata - The Effects of Insulation at RF By K8CC

In the last issue of the *FLASH*, we recounted an experiment performed by **Jeff Benson, N8CC** to determine the effects of insulated wire on antenna resonant length. The description of the experiment and its results were given correctly. However, in recounting the results as applied to the N8CC quad, the facts were reversed.

In the original article, we wrote that "When Jeff went to rebuild the quad for 20M and 15M, he first modeled it on the computer, then added 2% to the element lengths when he strung the the wire", which is not correct. To be precise, Jeff added 2% to the physical element lengths of his original quad and used these as a starting point for a new, optimized design. Using the computer, he then modified the element lengths to gain the desired performance. Finally, in rebuilding the quad he deducted 2% from the element lengths of the computer model when he strung the wire. As we previously reported, the performance of the quad is judged to accurately reflect the computer model.

Hopefully, this description will correct the errors portrayed in the previous information. My apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

WRTC UPDATE

By Dave Pruett, K8CC

The twelve American and Canadian teams for the WRTC have been chosen. They are:

FRC:	Captain W2GD, plus W0UA
MRRC:	Captain K8CC, plus K5GO
NCC:	Captain K3LR, plus WA8YVR
NCCC:	Captain N6TV, plus K7SS
NTCC:	Captain KR0Y, plus K1TO
PVRC:	Captain KF3P, plus KR2J
SCCC:	Captain K6LL, plus N2IC
SEDXC:	Captain K4BAI, plus KM9P
SOMC:	Captain WX3N, plus K5ZD
YCCC:	Captain K1K1, plus K3UA
VE #1:	Captain VE3EJ, plus VE3IY
VE #2:	Captain VE7NTT, plus VE7CC

In an exciting bit of WRTC news, the FCC has granted permission for the use of three-digit 1x1 callsigns for this event. The W6A-W6Z and K6A-K6Z callsign blocks have been allocated for use by the fifty-two WRTC teams. Each team's callsign will be issued to them shortly prior to the event. Sure hope we don't get one with an "E" at the end...

The rules are also starting to take shape. Each station will be allowed two transceivers, but only one can transmit (true multi-single) so there is no ten-minute rule. It seems strange, however, that we're only allowed one computer. Two antennas will be provided; a tribander and a 40M dipole. The WRTC stations will operate barefoot on 40M-10M only, during the first eighteen hours of the IARU HF Championship, and send standard exchanges. Scoring will be similar to IARU, however DXCC countries will also count as multipliers in addition to ITU zones.

One challenge for the teams is that we are "being encouraged" to bring our own equipment. The sponsors are not saying we HAVE to bring our own gear, but its likely they want to minimize having to round up equipment for everyone except the teams coming from overseas or where hardship exists. Stan and I prefer bringing our own gear to avoid taking a chance on equipment "pot luck". We now trying to decide what equipment to take. We would prefer to take two identical complete stations to accomodate any possible equipment failures.

Another challenge is trying to plan an operating strategy. Operating IARU barefoot from the West Coast is not likely to be like anything else we've done over the years. One more thing to ponder (and worry) over as we approach WRTC '96.

MRRC SCORES

Compiled by Jim Stahl, K8MR

CQ 160 CW

KC8MK	1084 x 112 =	416,000	Op. NZ4K
K8CC	1176 x 95 =	290,605	Op. AA8AV
WD8LLD	783 x 100 =	228,200	
K8MFO	203 x 97 =	115,333	
KU8E	430 x 68 =	73,000	Low Power
K8GL	307 x 69 =	54,579	Low Power
K8MR	370 x 59 =	51,035	4 hrs
N8ATR	180 x 76 =	45,000	
VE3ZTH	51 x 24 =	5,832	Low Power

ARRL DX CW

WD8LLD	68	38	(+KU8E, NZ4K, AF8A,
multi-multi	280	68	W8FN, N8ARD, WD8AUB)
	585	88	
	1068	95	
	123	62	
	9	6	
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	2133	357	= 2,282,301
K8MFO	800 x 42 =	580,800	All Band
K8GL	1176 x 95 =	335,160	14 MHz
K8MR	205 x 55 =	33,825	14 MHz

CQ 160 SSB

AA8U	1271 x 87 =	266,829	Multi
KC8MK	1259 x 84 =	253,720	+NZ4K, KU8E
WD9INF	1106 x 79 =	204,000	+KN8R, W8IQ, N8AAT,
			KG8CW, W8BJKR
N8ATR	1110 x 74 =	186,850	+WA8BIN, WB9K, N8DMM
KG8PE	805 x 66 =	118,734	S/O @ K8AQM
KA8D	250 x 47 =	25,820	S/O Low Power
K8MR	187 x 43 =	17,845	

ARRL DX SSB

K8CC	43	34	(+K8GL, AA8AV,
Multi-single	185	66	VA3NA)
	173	70	
	892	114	
	133	60	
	35	9	
	----	---	
	1461	353	= 1,547,199
N8ATR	36	31	
Single-Op	101	57	
Assisted	105	58	
	651	107	
	110	51	
	23	6	
	----	---	
	1026	310	= 953,250
KA8D	300 x 161 =	144,900	S/O assisted
KU8E	305 x 150 =	136,350	S/O assisted
K8MFO	115 x 110 =	37,950	S/O
K8MR	105 x 58 =	18,270	S/O 14 MHz
AA8U	62 x 43 =	7,740	S/O 1.8 MHz

A Review of the Timewave DSP 59+ Audio Noise Reduction Filter

By Goose Steingass, WD8LLD

During a telephone conversation with K8CC several months ago, Dave mentioned that a number of the low band ops living in Michigan were raving about the Timewave 59+ Digital Signal Processing filters. Since there was an upcoming Mad River Radio Club meeting at K8MR's in a few weeks, Dave offered to bring his recently-purchased unit so that we could play with it.

The meeting night arrived and down to the shack we went with the unit to hook it up to Jim's shunt fed 160 meter antenna system. We knew from the start that this probably would not be a very empirical test for the unit as Jim lives on a moderate city lot and has no room for beverage antennas. After listening to several stations with the unit connected to a visiting IC-706, I made the decision to try one myself and placed an order the following Monday.

Installing the unit is quite easy. An RCA type jack on the back of the unit accepts audio from the external speaker jack of the HF rig (in this case a Kenwood TS-830S). Power is supplied to the unit from an external 13.8 volt d.c. power supply, not included with the unit. The output from the DSP is provided to an 1/8" stereo phone jack on the front of the unit to drive a set of headphones or an external speaker.

The front panel of the unit contains switches for bypassing the filter, an audio AGC, high pass/low pass or bandpass filters, tone insertion, and noise reduction. There are also two rotary switches, which are dual function. The first one sets the desired center frequency audio tone on CW or can be used to establish the high pass filter skirt on SSB. The other switch is the bandpass filter width on CW or the low pass filter skirt for SSB. There is also a volume control for the output audio located on the front panel.

Since WD8LLD operates almost exclusively on CW, the filter operation was only tested in this mode. As a note of digression, the antenna system at WD8LLD consists of a 150-foot base insulated vertical which also contains stacked antennas for 20 meters and 40 meters. There is also a 650-foot E/W beverage that can be switched to terminate it in either of these two directions. The center audio frequency switch which is variable from 400 Hz to 2.21 kHz was initially set at 550 Hz. The CW bandwidth control is variable from 25 Hz to 600 Hz and was initially set at 100 Hz. The unit and the rig were switched on and the audio level on the rig was set so that the normal indicator on the panel would occasionally flash, as described in the manual.

As the band was tuned, relatively weak signals seemed to jump right out of the noise! Minor adjustments to the filter bandwidth and center frequency provided additional enhancement to these weak signals. The ultimate test was in being able to hear Kurt, S79MX, who was difficult copy without the unit but a very solid copy with the processor in operation. Because of the narrow passband of the filter it is possible to reject strong undesired signals immediately adjacent to the desired signal. Amazingly, there was very little pumping of the units AGC by the strong QRM. The filter can be screwed up tight enough so that the sidetone from the 830 becomes totally inaudible. Telwave has made an allowance for this in that they have provided a jack on the back to allow the PTT of the rig to bypass the filter when transmitting. A simple relay closure through the circuit used to key the amplifier will bypass the unit during transmit.

There was only one disadvantage that could be found with the 59+. When listening to a center audio frequency of approximately 800 Hz with a very narrow passband (100 HZ or less), the filter tends to ring a bit. Going to a lower center audio frequency solved this problem immediately. This is not a problem at WD8LLD as normally I don't listen to that high a tone anyway.

To sum the Telwave DSP 59+ up in one word, WOW! The filter has made a definite improvement in the signal to noise ratio of the received 160 meter signals at WD8LLD. The unit has become a welcome improvement at the 160 position in the LLD shack.

A Twenty-Mile Contest-pedition for the 1996 CQWW 160M Contest

By Ken Rogner, WD9INF

When I first heard that an old local AM radio broadcast station was no longer being used, I began to dream about its capabilities on the amateur bands, particularly 160 meters. After doing some research and placing a few telephone calls, I discovered the transmitter site of WTTO, located just off Ohio Turnpike exit 4A. The site consisted of six 165 foot transmitting towers, spaced 225 feet apart running in a straight line from north to south. Realizing that these towers were on insulated bases over perfect ground screens, I knew the potential of that site for a 160 meter contest.

Permission was given to access the site and make the necessary modifications to operate the 1996 CQWW 160M CW Contest. With only two weeks before the contest, we visited the site and found upon opening the door to the 12' x 18' transmitter building that the only visitors in the past ten years were mice and raccoons! The inside was filled with junk, insulation from a once-existing ceiling, transmitting tubes, old turntables, and animal excrement! There was no heat or electricity, but the old transmitter and phaser showed little signs of aging. We visited the "doghouses" on towers #3 and #4 and determined that these could be retuned and phased for operation on 1.825 MHz. After two hours of work, my Icom IC-751A (powered by a battery) brought life to the two-tower phased array. With a mere 75 watts. S9+20dB signal reports were received from stations in southern Ohio, central Michigan, and West Virginia. I knew we had great potential!

With one week to go, our plans were in full force. The team consisted of **Joe-N8AAT**, **Kurt-W8IQ**, **Ted-K8AQM**, **Bill-N8ABL**, **Brian-K8BCO**, **Mark-NU8Z** and myself. We decided that in order to be successful, we would need to build a full-blown contest station with multiple radios, amplifiers, computers, packet station, additional transmit antennas and at least three beverage receiving antennas.

We prepared a master list of equipment and assigning responsibilities to the members of the contest team. By Wednesday before the contest, most equipment was in hand including a 6.5KW 110VAC generator and a 4KW 220VAC generator. Friday morning of the contest, we started to work. Two kerosene heaters were brought in to warm the building and the big generator was started. Work then began on building the remaining antennas.

We erected three 800' beverages from a feed point some 250' away from the station building. Each beverage was supported by 1"x2"x8' lumber driven into the FROZEN ground, in itself a major undertaking. The NE beverage was terminated with a 470 ohm resistor, while the N-S and E-W beverages were left unterminated (and hence, bidirectional). After the beverages were built, an inverted vee (with a feedline over 500' long!) was erected about 85' up tower #5.

After tuning tower #6 as a single vertical, we started to build the station.

A CB ground plane existing at the site loaded nicely on 2 meters and within a short period of time we were connected to the PacketCluster on 147.54. An existing desk was cleaned and hosted the operating equipment. In addition to the packet station, we had two computers running K8CC's NA logging program, an FT-1000MP, a IC-751A, a 1.5KW amplifier, a 800W amplifier, remote switcher for the beverages, keyers, lights, etc. By 4 PM the station was complete and in operation. We were ready for the contest to start at 5 PM local.

Before saying anything about results, you must know that "Murphy" was present the entire weekend and we had our share of difficulties. Since the towers were longer than resonant, our tuners were only able to handle 800W without arcing. (The inverted vee would handle the full 1500W.) The wind kicked up early Saturday AM and broke eight of the beverage supports, plus two wires were broken and the NE antenna had to be re-terminated. Furthermore, this wind also created a problem where none of the towers would load, so before the day was done, we retuned tower #2 as an additional vertical. Both generators stopped at inopportune times for refueling and adding oil. The switch for the beverages on the rig was accidentally turned off and not to be discovered until after three hours of Europeans called us but we could not hear them. On top of everything else, the shack door would not close tight which made it very cold inside.

So, what about results???

1. Over 20 local hams visited our site during the contest.
2. We used 5 gallons of kerosene and 60 gallons of gasoline.
3. We consumed 1/2 lb of coffee, two pots of chili, five bottle of beer, 20+ cans of pop, and five cigars.
4. We made 940 CW contacts in 49 states (missed Maine!) and 30 countries, including four JAs, for a score of 202,000 points.

This was a very respectable score. Without the problems mentioned, our score would have been significantly higher. The weekend was a lot of fun. Many amateurs tout Field Day as a major experience; true "Field Day" pioneers would cherish an experience such as ours for a lifetime. The operators sat in cold chairs wearing snowmobile suits with hats and gloves huddled close to the heaters. We all wanted to win and we all wanted to have fun.

The station is silent again...waiting for another great adventure...MAYBE NEXT YEAR!

The MRRC Summer '96 Pacific DX-Peditions

Once again, MRRC members will be out on the the DXpeditionary trail.. Two groups from our club will be covering the Pacific this summer, activating a bunch of countries for the DXing faithful.

The first group is led by **Ted Rachwal, K8AQM/7J3ABO** along with **Jeff Benson, N8CC**. First stop is the **Marshall Islands - V7**, arriving on July 1. On July 4 they head to **Micronesia - V6** (activating both Ponape and Truk) then on to **Guam - KH2** on July 9. Over the next four days they will operate from Guam and also **Saipan - KH0**. On July 13, Jeff and Ted will head for Japan for three days to visit a number of the JA DXers Ted knows from his yearlong stint in Japan a few years back. Thus ends the first leg of the trip.

On July 17, Ted and Jeff start the second leg of the trip, heading for Honolulu to meet up with **Brian Sarkesian, KG8CO**. From there, the trio heads for **American Samoa - KH8** on July 19. Over the next ten days, they will operate from KH8 as well as **Western Samoa - 5W** and **Tonga - A3**. The exact schedule for each island is still being determined, but Ted anticipates spending most of the time on 5W and A3 due to demand and the recent activity by AH8A. On July 29, the crew heads home.

For equipment, the team will have a TS50/AL811A, another TS50/MLA2500, plus a IC-706 on the second leg. For antennas, they will have a lowband vertical modeled after the successful "Battle Creek Special", a two-element tribander, and other verticals. Despite the summer QRN, they hope to focus on the low bands, including 160M. On KH2, KH8 and KH0, the operators will sign their own calls with portable identifiers. Applications have been submitted for callsigns in A3, V6 & V7, while two of the Western Samoan calls are in hand - Ted will be 5W0TR and Jeff will be 5W0JB. Brian presumably will be 5W0BS.

A second MRRC group consisting of **Bruce Lallethin, AA8U** and **Stan Barczak, K8MJZ** will be heading to **Roratonga - ZK1** from July 10 - 20. They will be active in the IARU Radiosport Contest with Bruce's call **ZK1AAU**. They will also be active before and after the contest (where Stan will be signing **ZK1MJZ**) focusing on 160M and the WARC bands.

For equipment, Bruce and Stan will be taking FT-1000D and TS-870 transceivers plus an AL-811 amplifier. For antennas, they will have a R-7 vertical, a BC-Trapper (whatever that is - ed.) for 160/80, two trap dipoles for 80-10, and end-fed wire for emergencies, and "anything else we can put up without getting booted off the island" (their quote).

Should finances allow, the group intends to stay and operate from four of the other ZK islands during the RSGB IOTA contest later in July. However, they doubt that their XYLs will stay that long.

GOOOOOO MAD RIVER!!!!!!!!!!!!

ARRL DX CW from 9A1A

By Dick Frey, K4XU

Via the Internet, richard.frey@Harris.COM

Greetings from beautiful downtown Croatia! The 9A1A score shown is very preliminary. I took my .BIN file and merged it with one from the other side of the loop which was broken for a good part of Saturday night and Sunday morning. CT users note: we do not use a "station #1" in the network, so there is no timing sent around the loop. This greatly reduces the traffic on the network, but when I merged the logs I had about 30% dupes because the times were off by a minute or so.

Since I operated only 160, 20, and 15M, all I know about the other bands is interpretation of the gab and network traffic - when it was working. The ARRL DX from Europe is a neat contest. It is a nighttime thing until dawn, some sleep, an afternoon foray, then another nap until starting over. A 48 hour contest and about ten hours of sleep. Wonderful!

160M: Looks like 9A1A is finally out of the "alligator class". There were a few short outbreaks of line noise but the wx was clear and dry. Bigger problem was that most of the local autos do not have suppressed ignitions. The snow was too deep for us to use the driveway. With three or four of our cars parked on the road in front of the schoolhouse where the towers are installed, the local traffic had to navigate the remaining half lane very carefully. The first station worked was K1ZM followed by W3LPL. Never touched my dial after laying claim to 1833.5. Once or twice I thought about it after TM1C or UA2F opened up next door. Some of those stations are rather broad.... 124 contacts and 30 mults the first night ending with a dupe on N2RM at 0622. The second night started with K3NZZ at 2226Z. If anything it was better than the first night, but not as many stations available since we had already worked all the big signals. Again, no S&P. Just lots of CQ on 1834. I did tune around a bit with the sub receiver on the 950SDX to see if there were any stations we missed, but we had already worked anyone strong enough to be calling CQ. The last station of Sunday AM was N4KG in AL at 610. Niksha, 9A5W worked three more stations before packing it up Sunday night, though he was plagued by high line noise. Except for KB5UL in NM, nothing to the west at all. The whole station, amplifiers, radios, rotor controls, VHF/UHF radios, TNCs, power supplies, cots, sleeping bags, all have to be packed up and put in the closet or the cars before leaving. Remember, the contest here ends at 1AM on Monday. The 160M station is a TS950SDX + 77DX to a sloper from the top of the 15M tower at 110'. Rx help from a 1 wave Beverage.

80M: THE place to be. The operator was Emil, 9A9A, who installed a 300 degree "stealth" beverage the day before using TOW antitank missile wire. It ran from the corner of the building and across the road at 6M high then continued another wavelength at 3M high to the termination - worked like a champ. At the end of the first night, Emil was 220 QSOs ahead of 40M. Rig: Just like 160 into a pair of

full sized phased verticals over 48 radials each.

40M: I'm not sure who the operator was, but he was an unhappy dude missing the rates more typical of this band. Reasonably good long path openings to the west coast both days during the 15Z hour: 39/4 the first afternoon and 17/0 the second including N0DH/7. Gear: TS950SDX with an old semi-homebrew amp that died early Saturday AM and was replaced with a 77DX, into a 4el KLM at 80 feet.

20M: Using a 6/6 stack on this band at 120/60' gives you an edge when working to a specific area of the world. The TIC ring on the top is sure an improvement over the weather-beaten and SLOW tailtwister! Saturday Robie 9A3GW and Braco 9A2R had 20M. It started slowly (except for a single 0004Z Q with W100) with K1KI at 0923. Less than 20/hr until 12Z. A 100/hr feeding frenzy for the next seven hours then nothing, like someone flipped a switch at 1910Z. Ditto for Sunday but only 75/hr. I did 20M after 15M cooled each day at 1530Z. Its fun to say hi to the occasional friend in the middle of a pileup. Maybe some thought we were using N6TR-log in the name mode. I really enjoyed operating with Robie who types a helluva lot better than I. On Sunday there is no reason for us ever to S&P except with the sub rx. We stay in one spot (get it?) and defend it against all comers...including N3AD and K0RF who both made concerted but futile attempts to steal it. Similar equipment on 20M: 950S and Alpha into 6/6. Missed Lab, VE8 and YUK, hello VY1JA?

15M: We exercised the rotator on the top 6el looking for an opening. Swinging from skew path over Africa to direct on every signal heard coming out of the noise. Never anything big on Saturday. 70 Qs with a rousing 38 hour at 14Z. On Sunday I started with a personal goal to break 150Qs and 25 mults. It began just like Saturday, slowly with skew path signals 10, 20 an hour when all hell broke loose at 1515Z. 78 in that hour, 139 the next, then nothing. Stations would come in waves as spots hit clusters in different parts of the country. No problem making the goal. Gear: the 160M station with 6/6/6 starting at 120'.

10M: We tried! The 5/5/5 stack was sweeping the ether both skew and direct. Operators Pero 9A6A and Darko 9A6D made a brave effort, but all they could hear was the occasional Italian making it across.

The Croatian DX Club, 9A1A, has made a big effort to improve conditions at the primary school in Kozjaca. This time there was running water for the first time in four years. A pipe in the foundation had burst from frost and the school system had no funds for repair. That makes teaching the 15 students in grades 1-4 hard, but life for the teacher's family who live in the attached apartment must have been really difficult. The kitchen even had hot water! Braco proved to be a superior cook:

bean soup and sausages without flatulence. The kitchen also serves as a shack for 9A1KOZ, the local school club. The kids are all age 8-14 and come from several of the small schools in the area where 9A1A teaches radio classes twice a week. Even with running water, we polished off two cases of Karlavacko Pivo (the local beer in 0.5 liter bottles)....

There is nothing quite like starting the contest after having had a shot of the local homebrew called rakia. About 120 proof and administered with gusto by Bozho, the schoolmaster. It seems to improve my resistance to loud static crashes....

It looks like I'll be here for another two weeks. Listen for me as 9A/K4XU in the WW160 SSB and again with 9A1A in ARRL SSB.

My apologies to the gang at K4VX. I hated to leave them short-handed. Just pay their ransom demand and I'll be available by WPX...

BAND	QSO	MULTS
160	269	39
80	701	45
40	1132	52
20	1234	59
15	354	36
10	0	0

Total	3650	231 = 2.5M
Ops: 9A9A, 9A5D, 9A6D, 9A5W, 9A2R, 9A7R, 9A6A, 9A2DQ, 9A3GW, K4XU, and about 4 others.		

DAYTON SUITE NEWS

With Goose having to miss Saturday at Dayton due to family commitments, I have volunteered to coordinate the MRRC Dayton Suite. We have most of the arrangements made, such as the room, beverages, etc., but we need volunteers to tend bar. So far, the following slots are filled:

Friday: 8-10PM W8FN/KE8OC
10-12AM Open
12-close Open

Saturday: 8-10PM K8MR/AC8E
10-12AM Open
12-close KU8E/NZ4K(?)

We're still looking for volunteers! Drop me a le-mail to sign up yourself and a buddy to take a shift and help out the club.

73, Jeff, KU8E
jdclarke@freenet.columbus.oh.us

What REALLY makes you good?

By Trey Garlough, WN4KKN

Via the Internet - garlough@tgv.com

I would like to offer up two quotations that sum up my general beliefs on the topic of "What REALLY makes you good". The first is from someone in my peer group, and second is from someone who I would categorize as a personal contesting hero from my formative years in contesting, although I doubt he actually knows this :-).

"With experience comes knowledge and cunning. I can't stand here and tell you the secrets, as many of them are second nature to me now." - KR0Y/5

"The best of the best gained their winning edge practicing the basics over and over in numerous forgettable events, often using inadequate radios and second-rate antennas. Discovering how to overcome such obstacles are lessons never forgotten." - NCJ Profile of N6RO

And now for a bit of a digression:

I have observed many "second tier" (and others down through the neophyte ranks of) contesters think that there is some set of winning "tricks" that the "first tier" contesters use to beat them, and if only someone would let them in on these terrific secrets, they would be first rate contesters themselves. These people are setting themselves up for disappointment, because I'm going to let them in on the biggest secret of all:

"There are no secrets!"

It turns out, as with most things in life, that skill and hard work pay the most reliable dividends in the long run.

Now for some specific advice. None of these things are mandatory to win, but collectively they really add up:

o Know the code. 50 WPM conversational is a nice milestone - note: don't try this at home with pencil and paper.

o Know the bands. Nothing like knowing the right band to be on to improve your score.

o Know your station. Knowing whether or not your station has the gusto to run people or crack pileups under given conditions on a given band is a real time saver.

o Stay in the chair. You can't be the loudest station on the air if you are not on the air.

And now for some general advice:

o Operate a lot. Experience is king. I learn something every time I operate.

o Solicit advice from a variety of experienced people. Some of the "experts" will be more compatible with you on a personal level than others, so shop around and get a variety of points of view.

To wit, after I post this message, I will get a few notes from various folks, about half of which will say "I really identified with what you wrote. You're a genius!" and the other half of which will say "You're a moron. Get stuffed!"

-73, de Trey, HC8N (QSL via AA5BT), WN4KKN/6



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