

The Editor's Keyboard

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I think it was General George S. Patton who offered the adage "Know Thine Enemy". While I would never characterize our contesting brethren from the Minnesota Wireless Association as the "enemy", as we gird our loins to do battle with them in the 2004 Sweepstakes Affiliated Club Competition let me share some intelligence concerning their past efforts.

Last year, MWA finished fifth out of six entries in the Unlimited category with **5,198,134 points** from **99** entries, an average of **52,506** points per entry. But 2003 was a below-average year for MWA. Over the past four club competitions (2000-2003) MWA has averaged **74,728** points from **83** entries resulting in an average club score of **6,062,247** points..

Last year, MRRC won the Medium category with **3,610,468** from **44** entries, and average of **82,056** points per entry. But 2003 was a down year for MRRC as well. Over the past four club competitions MRRC has averaged **96,909** points from **47** entries resulting in an average club score of **4,573,285**. Perhaps even more impressive is that over the past 28 years of club competitions (1976-2003) MRRC has averaged **97,534** points per entry. Not many clubs can make that claim!

So it seems simple enough - MRRC routinely gets more points from each of it's entries, so we should be able to readily beat MWA if we can roust up enough entries. But that's the rub - MRRC has never in it's history fielded enough entries to generate a score to match MWA's four-year average of 6.0M. In order to match MWA's best score over that period (7,084,314 from 91 entries), MRRC would need to field **73 "historical average" entries**. This is particularly sobering because other than 1971 (the "asterisk year" when we got disqualified for membership/recruiting issues) the most entries MRRC has ever had in an SS club competition was **52**.

If all 81 MRRC members currently on the roster contributed a "historically average" score, our score would be **7,900,254 points**. Is that good enough to beat MWA? Maybe, but I think it would be foolish to think they won't "up their game" as well.

CU in SS...GO MAD RIVER!

Big Fish

(Continued from page 1)

In other QSO Party news, the results of the Michigan event have been posted to the web. Check out <http://www.miqp.org> for all the scoop. **Ken, W8MJ** made some serious noise in the California and Pennsylvania events, posting his usual lofty scores. The "pair of Jims" (**K8MR** and **W8DRZ**) did some mobiling and roving in PA as well.

A lot of events coming up on the calendar have club competitions. While we are emphasizing Sweepstakes, I hope everyone will be able to participate to some extent in the CQ WWs, ARRL 160, and ARRL 10. Having regular strong showings in a variety of contests is a large part of what keeps MRRC recognized as a top tier contest club!

Good luck to all in the upcoming contests! GO MAD RIVER!

73, Mike K9NW

MRRC Activates VE1 In CW SS

MRRCer Ken, W8MJ will be traveling to Nova Scotia for CW SS. He'll be operating from the well-equipped station of Jim, VE1JF. Ken will be single-op high power and will be taking SO2R gear so he should be easy to work. No worries about getting the MAR multiplier on CW this year!

SS Resources On The Web

MRRC members looking for additional resources about Sweepstakes should check out the MRRC web site and download a copy of the MRRC Sweepstakes Handbook. The second edition, last updated in October 2002, contains thirteen sections on a variety of useful SS-specific topics. There are specific sections for each of the official categories, plus a number of general ones such as:

- SS Demographics
- Antennas and Propagation for SS
- Planning and taking off time
- Ten ways to maximize part-time efforts

To download the SS Handbook log into the MRRC web site at <http://www.mrrc.net>. At the bottom of the article panel on the left side of the screen, where it says "first page previous page 1 2 3 4...", press page "3" and you'll find the download for the SS Handbook at the bottom of the panel.

Sweepstakes Top Ten Scores For Michigan Through 2003

CW

CW Single Operator - High Power			
94 WA8ZDT	195000	1300	75
96 K8CC	188916	1211	78
93 WA8ZDT	182704	1202	76
91 K8CC	182490	1185	77
93 K8CC	181336	1193	76
90 K8CC	171300	1142	75
83 WA8YVR	159100	1075	74
88 K8CC	156436	1057	74
78 K8LX	153150	1021	75
83 K8CC	152144	1028	74

CW Single Operator - Low Power			
01 W8MJ	171680	1073	80
02 W8MJ	163214	1033	79
03 W8MJ	161634	1023	79
97 W8MJ	159738	1011	79
99 W8MJ	154440	990	78
98 W8MJ	151838	961	79
96 AA8AV	148824	954	78
94 AA8AV	142604	926	77
97 WA8RRR	139620	895	78
74 W8CQN	137492	929	74

CW Single Operator - QRP			
00 W8RU	102700	650	79
98 W8RU	95004	609	78
99 W8RU	91504	602	76
97 W8RU	88160	580	76
97 K8XXX (K8AQM)	79560	510	78
02 K8SB	77844	499	78
94 K8AQM	77400	516	75
01 K8SB	75924	513	74
96 WB8RUQ	71188	481	74
03 N8UE (WA8VNE)	67192	454	74

CW Single Operator - Unlimited			
99 AA8U	142200	900	79
03 W4FMS	129948	833	78
02 W4FMS	122122	793	77
01 K8AQM	84800	530	80
00 AA8U	82560	516	80
00 ND5S	45760	277	79
03 N8IA	24500	175	70
99 ND5S	20440	140	73
00 AA8TC	16950	113	75
00 N8JM	8330	85	49

CW Multi Operator			
97 K8LX	197974	1253	79
01 K8CC	197920	1237	80
02 K8CC	192640	1204	80
00 K8CC	190240	1189	80
96 WA8ZDT	180024	1154	78
95 AA8U	172018	1117	77
94 AA8U	164934	1071	77
99 K8CC	164636	1042	79
87 K8AQM	162504	1098	74
01 K8JM	160370	1015	79

SSB

SSB Single Operator - High Power			
93 K8CC (WD8IJP)	294294	1911	77
96 K8CC (K9TM)	272064	1744	78
94 WA8ZDT	263802	1713	77
95 K8CC (WD8IJP)	252406	1639	77
94 K8CC (WD8IJP)	249942	1623	77
94 AA8U	248248	1612	77
96 AA8U	247572	1587	78
93 AA8U	239316	1554	77
91 K8MJZ	239008	1552	77
92 K8MJZ	236852	1538	77

SSB Single Operator - Low Power			
02 W8MJ	208640	1304	80
95 AA8AV	206052	1338	77
97 W8MJ	202082	1279	79
98 W8MJ	196394	1243	79
01 W8MJ	196000	1225	80
00 W8MJ	195040	1219	80
96 W8MJ	190832	1222	78
92 AA8AV	186494	1211	77
94 AA8AV	186032	1208	77
03 W8MJ	178640	1160	77

SSB Single Operator - QRP			
93 WB8G	100408	652	77
02 K8IR	63360	396	80
03 N8NM	46920	340	69
89 KB8DLH	43216	296	73
03 K8IR	41344	304	68
99 K8LJQ	40584	267	76
95 W8ERN	32850	219	75
98 K8LJQ	29680	212	70
03 NZ8O (K8CC)	28914	237	61
89 W8VWY	28676	216	67

SSB Single Operator - Unlimited			
99 AA8U	213300	1350	79
01 NU8Z	166720	1042	80
99 N8SNM	154596	991	78
00 N8SNM	150880	943	80
00 NU8Z	140640	879	80
01 N8SNM	146080	913	80
03 N8SNM	112050	747	75
99 ND5S	67466	427	79
02 KT8X	52456	332	79
00 WX3M	42976	272	79

SSB Multi Operator			
98 K8CC	272708	1726	79
95 AA8U	250250	1625	77
96 NU8Z	246460	1580	78
93 K8MJZ	246092	1598	77
03 K8CC	244584	1548	79
02 N8KR	240960	1506	80
02 K8CC	240160	1501	80
01 N8KR	240000	1500	80
96 KG8CW	233064	1494	78
95 KG8EF	231616	1504	77

Sweepstakes Top Ten Scores For Ohio Through 2003

CW

CW Single Operator - High Power			
95 K8AZ (K8NZ)	193732	1258	77
02 K9NW	183040	1144	80
93 KW8N (WD8IXE)	180424	1187	76
92 KW8N (WD8IXE)	180334	1171	77
92 WR3G	179256	1164	77
93 KQ8M	178752	1176	76
00 K9NW	177440	1109	80
03 K9NW	176328	1116	79
01 K9NW	175040	1094	80
91 WR3G	173866	1129	77

CW Single Operator - Low Power			
97 K8BL	162740	1030	79
99 K9TM	162740	1030	79
00 K9TM	158400	990	80
98 K9TM	157248	1008	78
95 K8BL	154308	1002	77
92 K8CX	153846	999	77
02 K8BL	153740	961	80
94 K8BL	150766	979	77
94 K8CX	149842	973	77
93 K8BL	149264	982	76

CW Single Operator - QRP			
94 K8MFO	100168	659	76
00 N8ET	95004	609	78
99 WA8RJF	84300	562	75
95 WA8RJF	83232	578	72
92 WA8RJF	82950	553	75
97 WA8RJF	79952	526	76
00 WA8RJF	77000	500	77
99 N8BC (K8BL)	76284	489	78
94 WA8RJF	75460	539	70
90 K8BL	75000	500	75

CW Single Operator - Unlimited			
02 N8BJQ	148000	925	80
99 W0CG	144924	929	78
02 W8AV	107598	681	79
03 W0CG	46224	321	72
03 K8YM (ND8L)	35076	237	74
03 AF8C	33142	227	73
00 K4LT	31840	199	80
99 K8MFO	12482	79	79
03 AA8LL	12322	101	61
99 K8BL	11848	77	77

CW Multi Operator			
01 W8AV	162266	1027	79
83 WB8JBM	161616	1092	74
99 W8AV	159738	1011	79
99 KU8E	155220	995	78
82 WB8JBM	154944	1076	72
81 WB8JBM	154322	1057	73
84 WB8JBM	150088	1028	73
02 W8FT	149942	949	79
95 WD8LLD	148918	967	77
00 W8EDU	147520	922	80

SSB

SSB Single Operator - High Power			
97 K8DX	298778	1891	79
93 KW8N (NZ4K)	270424	1756	77
00 K8DX	252000	1575	80
91 K8AZ (K8NZ)	238700	1550	77
99 K8DX	237790	1505	79
00 K8ND	237440	1484	80
95 NZ8O	235620	1530	77
00 N8VW	233920	1462	80
01 K8DX	226572	1434	79
92 NZ8O	225148	1462	77

SSB Single Operator - Low Power			
94 N8JEC	189266	1229	77
99 KU8E	184228	1166	79
96 K8JZ	175656	1126	78
02 W8DD	175200	1095	80
01 W8DD	174400	1090	80
03 N0FW	171200	1070	80
00 ND8DX	170080	1063	80
01 K8BL	162720	1017	80
02 K8BL	159840	999	80
02 ND8DX	158400	990	80

SSB Single Operator - QRP			
02 K9TM	133120	832	80
03 N8IE	68882	471	71
02 N8IE	67680	423	80
01 N8WL	65832	422	78
93 WA8RJF	64824	438	74
92 W8ILC	64064	416	77
92 WA8RJF	61500	410	75
01 N8IE	60514	383	79
98 WA8RJF	53246	337	79
00 N8IE	52480	328	80

SSB Single Operator - Unlimited			
00 N8BJQ	114240	714	80
03 N8TR	109760	686	80
00 K8BL	109600	686	80
02 N8BJQ	105600	660	80
01 N8TR	101600	635	80
00 N8TR	93600	585	80
01 N8OH	88800	555	80
03 N8OH	84360	555	76
02 N8OH	70080	488	80
00 WT8C	57986	367	79

SSB Multi Operator			
95 KW8N	332640	2160	77
96 KW8N	325728	2088	78
94 KW8N	316008	2052	77
92 KW8N	304766	1979	77
91 KW8N	294140	1910	77
95 WD9INF	288750	1875	77
98 KW8N	287718	1821	79
89 KW8N	260106	1689	77
85 WB8JBM	255744	1728	74
02 N8HR	252000	1575	80

Essential SS Antennas

By Dave Pruett, K8CC

SS is a domestic contest, and so we need to be sure that our station antennas work well for stateside paths. Furthermore, SS's "work a station once" format causes certain bands to be emphasized while others are less crucial. Obviously, SS can be done with ANY antenna, but some work better than others.

Optimizing antennas for SS is not just something big guns do. Most of the antennas being recommended here are simple and cheap. Even if you're in a restricted-space situation, perhaps you can put up some of the suggested antennas just for the weekend. Hey, it's November - snow will be on the ground and your neighbor might not mind that dipole sneaking into his yard for a couple of days :-)

So here are the recommended SS antennas, in order of priority:

40M HIGH-ANGLE DIPOLE or INVERTED-VEE - This antenna, at a low-to-moderate height will be the key to a W8's SS effort. It's been my experience that 2/3 of the SS QSOs worked from K8CC come from 40M, and even though I have three antennas for that band, the low domestic dipole works probably 75% of them. The keys are high-angle radiation (to work inside the 500 mile circle so critical to W8s) and omnidirectional pattern. Try for a height between 20' and 50' at the feedpoint (higher is NOT better). While a flat-top dipole might be preferred, inverted-vees are fine as long as the angle between the legs is not too steep (90° at least, but more is better).

80M HIGH-ANGLE DIPOLE or INVERTED-VEE - Same as the previous antenna, but translated to 80M. This will be a very important antenna once darkness prevails across the USA. Shoot for a height from 30' to 100' with the same caveats as above.

20M/15M/10M ANTENNA - These are the hardest bands for the W8 SSer to benefit from. The problem is target area - most of the time, all that we hear on these bands are stations west of the Mississippi River. 20M occasionally opens to the east coast, but 15M and 10M almost never do. The fundamental advice is to have SOME sort of antenna for these bands, for S&P'ing new stations to work and finding the western multipliers, at least. The best antenna for these bands is a beam between 35' and 70' above ground. Next best would be a dipole at the same heights. Verticals are OK as long as these are efficient (which means sufficient radials or a ground-independent design like the Cushcraft R-7000) and located away from buildings which could block their signal. Random wires have patterns which are hard to predict -

these have gain in certain directions but deep nulls in others, but are better than nothing.

LOW-ANGLE 40M ANTENNA - The high-angle 40M dipole/inverted-vee is optimized for daytime operation, but will certainly work for night-time QSOs. However, a lower-angle 40M antenna will work better at night and probably make it easier to run. The best solution is a 40M beam aimed west, 60' or higher. Yes, this would be a significant dollar investment, unless it's a wire array hung from trees just for SS weekend. An efficient vertical or ground plane would be good, or perhaps an array of phased verticals.

So these are the antennas which are most important to the W8 SSer. With these antennas you'll have the most important bands and paths covered, giving you the best chance for a good score.

Other ideas you might consider would be to add a low-angle 80M antenna (for working the West Coast at night) or some low noise receiving antennas like beverages, pennants, EWEs or such. If you have space, you might also put up multiple antennas for the same band. It's been our experience at K8CC that when signals are weak and copy is rough, simply switching to another (different) antenna often improves copy enough to make the QSO.

To show what might be possible with a simple antenna farm, consider the K8CC scores from the 1983 SS while I was still operating from my parent's QTH. My antennas were four individual dipoles for 80/40/20/15. The lowest dipole (15) was 20' high and the highest (80) was 40' high. Running the legal limit, I made 1028 QSOs on CW and 1171 on SSB. Both were decent scores for their day, and the CW score is still the tenth best ever done from MI eleven years later. While I got pushed around on 20M and 15M, on 80M and 40M I was in the same league as the "big guns" and the result was a lot of fun.

I've always maintained that SS was a really great contest for the little gun because really big (and hence expensive) antennas are not needed. Hopefully the ideas presented here will inspire you to optimize your antenna farm for our challenge with the MWA this November in SS.

New MRRC Callsigns:

N5TU is now N8SS

WX3M is now K8BB

Work 'em in Sweepstakes!

Mad River Radio Club

Dave Pruett K8CC
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Treasurers Report October 27, 2004

Balance Forward	\$740.88
Dues collected this period	\$312.00
MiQP Plaques	\$480.00
MRRC Badges	\$5.00
Sweepstakes Plaques	(\$268.00)
Balance	\$1269.88

Please note that the MiQP plaque money is being help to provide a single payment for all the plaques including \$60 for the MRRC-sponsored plaque.

Contact Sean, K8KHZ to order your MRRC badge. New name badges are \$15.00. Please make your check payable to Mad River Radio Club. Show your MRRC spirit and purchase your badge if you don't already have one!

Thanks for the positive responses to my solicitation for dues collection.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dennis Ward, KT8X

Club Resources

The Mad River Radio Club is an ARRL affiliated club of amateur radio contesting enthusiasts. The club is centered near Findlay, OH and serves Ohio and the surrounding States. Membership is open to anyone.

The **Flash** is the official newsletter of MRRC and is published six times per year. Submission of material for publication is welcome. It may be sent to the editor at the postal or e-mail address shown at right. The **Flash** may be reprinted in whole or in part provided proper credit is given.

Club dues are \$12 per year, payable after the 1st of May each year with a grace period thru 31st of July each year. Members of the same family living at the same address may elect to receive a single Flash for one set of dues. Fulltime students are eligible for dues at half price. Dues are to be paid to the treasurer at the address shown above. Please make checks payable to *Mad River Radio Club*.

The club roster appears annually in the October/November issue of the **Flash**.

The Mad River Net is held on Monday nights at 8:30 PM Eastern time on 3825 KHz.

The MRRC web site is <http://www.mrrc.net>.

Keep up with MRRC happenings by subscribing to the MRRC Internet Reflector. To join send an email to mrrc-re-quest@contesting.com. The body of the message should include "subscribe mrrc yourcall".

K8MAD is the club callsign of the Mad River Radio Club.

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