

Contest Soapbox

2002 ARRL June VHF QSO Party

41 Soapbox entries available

K8DXN/R -- Sep 9, 2002 11:48 ET

Junes 'test was the most fun and the most demanding of all of my roves. I was in Minnesota on Saturday and did not operate due to a wedding but left for home (WV) on Sunday morning around 10 am local. I started west of the twin cities and drove to Indy before I called it quits. Around 700 miles driving. My best score to date in any vhf contest. I met lots of rovers along the way and had some unbelievable qso's on 432. The flat terrain really helps. -- *K8DXN*

WB2FKO/R -- Aug 19, 2002 00:33 ET



Slim pickins in DM84....This looked like a good spot at 5000+ feet ASL and unrestricted views to the horizon in every direction. For several hours on Saturday afternoon I couldn't raise a soul from this location on "Caprock" in eastern New Mexico. Fortunately, 6 meters opened just as the sun was going down when I was in DM75. Worked many stations in the southeast and midwest with only 8 Watts and the loop. Hope to be out there again in September with a bunch more power on 6.
-- *WB2FKO*

WB2FKO/R in DM84 with the 2-meter beam pointed at Oklahoma. Where were you guys?

KM7VU -- Jul 18, 2002 10:46 ET

Brrrrrrrr! Got snowed off the Butte early Sunday morning. High winds driving snow at 6000' in DN14, 6 meter propagation was non-existent! -- *K7SMA*

W3KWH -- Jul 14, 2002 11:44 ET



OUR OPERATING LOCATION

AFTER SOME ABSENCE W3KWH IS AGAIN ACTIVE IN VHF/UHF CONTESTING FROM EN90. SO FAR JUST ACTIVE ON 6/2/432/1296 LOW POWER ON ALL BANDS (100 W OR LESS) HOPEFULLY WE WILL BE IMPROVING AND ADDING MORE BANDS. TNX ALL QSO ESPECIALLY ON 1296 WE DID QUITE WELL FOR TEN WATTS AND A 55 ELE LOOP UP 65 FEET ...SEE ALL IN THE SEPT CONTEST.. FOR MORE INFO SEE WWW.W3KWH.COM
-- W3KWH

W4OZK -- Jul 11, 2002 18:52 ET



I enjoyed working the 2002 ARRL June VHF QSO Party from EM74, northeast Alabama this year!! 6 meters proved to be my best band with 2 meters not far behind. Once again during this contest, I experienced poor band conditions west of EM54 on all bands??? Looking forward to the next ARRL contest!!

73 Greg -- W4OZK

W4EUH -- Jul 8, 2002 19:25 ET

The conditions for this contest were awesome from North Georgia, EM74. I missed my all time 50MHZ grid count from 2000 by only one grid. It was great to hear all the UHF activity down in Florida, I am sorry I did not have a 1296 station, as some of the 400+ mile QSO's on 432MHZ were 59+!!! Someday I will get back on that band. It was also nice to work some familiar calls in Virginia on 144 MHZ & some New England/Mid Atlantic stations on 50MHZ. This contest netted my best single op score ever for a VHF contest. Thanks to all the rovers, that is hard work! -- W4EUH



I really do operate from a "Shack!"

N3EMF -- Jul 4, 2002 12:55 ET



Walt, WA1HHN's, site

The Hudson Watershed VHF Society operated in the June 2002 VHF QSO Party as N3EMF in FM19 from WA1HHN's new site on South Mountain near Shippensburg, PA.

This was a very exciting contest for us! The combination of an awesome site, an amazing antenna farm, state of the art equipment, and a great team of operators resulted in a score which was more than twice that of any in our group's ten year history.

Many thanks to Walt, WA1HHN, and to everyone who worked us and contributed to our success.

For more pictures of Walt's site visit:
<http://www.geocities.com/southmountainproject>

-- N2GKM



The 49.5', nine element 6 Meter Beam and FM Vertical on their 80' tower



The June Watershead Contest Team: Front Row, JP, W2XX, Bob-N2GDY, Frank-W2IX, Bob-N2DVQ, Russ-N3EMF Second row: Bob-WB2NVR, TOM-WB2NHC, Frank-WB2BTJ, Dwight-N2FMC, Joe-N2GCZ, Norm-N2GKM, Adam-N2DHH



The Main Operating Room w/ 432, 2M and 222 Stations in action.

KB0ZKX -- Jul 1, 2002 18:10 ET



Here is my rover setup ready to go on Saturday morning. A few hours drive to the corner of EN47,46,37,36. A telescoping mast has brought the setup time down to about 15 minutes, at each location. The second picture is of the mast fully extended with antenna's From the top down, 2m vertical, 1296 22 el. Yagi M2, 432 719B 24 el. Yagi Cushcraft, 2m 13B2 13el. Yagi Cushcraft, 222 Yagi Cushcraft, 6m 3el. Yagi Cushcraft. Enjoyed the contest. -- *KB0ZKX*



N9RLA /R -- Jul 1, 2002 09:55 ET

N9RLA/R After Action Report 2002 ARRL June VHF QSO Party

Well I finally got the log finished up and ready to submit. I log all of my FM QSO's while in motion on a tape recorder. This works well, but is a real pain after the contest. This time out I made a couple of dozen FM QSO's, which really made a significant difference to my score:-)

In the 2001 June contest I had my best score ever, so my goal for this years contest was to top that score. To help achieve that goal I added an extra band [432] and planned to activate two more grids [10 in all].

I started out Saturday deep in the heart of Kentucky in EM88cd. Thanks to Bob Burns, K4RXXR, for locating a very good site at the Bath County High School parking lot. Running behind as usual, we managed to get on the air just in time for my 1830z sked. Unfortunately, band conditions were pretty flat, and we didn't make near as many contacts as I had hoped. All the

equipment seemed to be working well, except for my 2 meter yagi which mysteriously developed an SWR of about 2.5:1. One pleasant surprise was my "new" DEM 432 transverter which, even with low power, netted me a bunch of QSO's. One mistake that I have a habit of making is staying in a grid too long, and I did it again here. This was a very good site, but the QSO's were coming really slow. But I stayed for a few hours hoping for better conditions that just didn't happen.

When we finally gave up on EM88, Bob and I made a quick trip over to another good site he had found in EM87ew, a hilltop cemetery just outside of Frenchburg, KY. This was a very peaceful site, and none of the tenants complained, so we stayed here for a few hours as well:-) I still had trouble with the 2 meter yagi, so I had to run with reduced power. As in EM88, QSO's were hard to come by. What happened to all of the folks that were supposed to be on down in Tennessee? After spending too much time in this grid as well, we picked up and headed for EM77.

After a quick trip that crossed back through the corners of EM88 and EM78, we stopped in EM77vx in Winchester, KY. It was getting pretty late in the evening by this time, so we were going to have to make this a quick grid. Instead of finding a better site, we chose to setup in the parking lot of a nearly empty shopping center. This turned out to be a pretty poor site mainly due to a tremendous noise level on 2 meters, but we did manage to pick up a few QSO's. Just at the edge of dark we started getting a little 6 meter eskip. It was pretty weak, and several stations were in just long enough for me to get "The rover station, again ple.....ssssss", but I did manage to snag a few good mults. After all of this the eskip was gone, it was well after dark, I was about 3 hours away from home, and I was more than ready to call it a day. So due to time restraints, I skipped EM67 all together and headed home. By my original schedule, I planned to operate in EM78 for a few hours but as it was nearly midnight I decided to go to bed and pick up EM78 at the end of the contest.

After a little more sleep than I had intended, I was getting a late start again. Before leaving Sunday morning I decided that I needed to switch to the backup 2 meter antenna. My little 4 element CushCraft yagi isn't great as far as gain goes, but it is a veteran of many Rover trips and always works well. While changing out the 2 meter antenna I discovered my 6 meter Moxon rectangle had sustained quite a bit of damage so I decided to go to the backup antenna on 6 as well, my little square loop ala K0FF, another Rover veteran antenna. With antenna problems solved, I get started Sunday morning several hours behind from my original plan. So instead of heading straight up to EM69, I decided to hit the closer grid of EM68 for a few hours first.

EM68 went rather well. Band conditions were still nothing to brag about, but activity seemed to have increased and I made quite a few QSO's from my spot near Salem IN. Kicking myself now for staying so long in the first couple of grids, I didn't stay very long here and soon headed up to one of my favorite spots in EM69.

By the time I reached EM69 in Brown County State Park near Nashville, IN, band conditions were getting pretty bad. I had a rough time working even the big guns like K8GP, KG4BMH, or AA4ZZ. And many of the small stations had either given up, or I just couldn't hear them at all. With band conditions as poor as they were, I didn't stay long in EM69 and headed for EN70.

In EN70 I setup in the parking lot of a shopping center on the east side of Noblesville, IN. This is an OK spot, as the land in this area is pretty darn flat, so have decent range from here. I stopped long enough to work several of the big guns. It's getting pretty late in the afternoon by this time and activity is really dropping so I pick up soon and head for EN60.

Just accross the grid border in EN60 I found another shopping center parking lot. Again I work most of the big stations, but I had a HUGE noise level on 6, so that cost me several QSO's. One highlight from EN60 was finding K4TO down in EM77 and working him on 2 and 432! Not bad for 11 elements at 30' with 10 watts out:-) K4TO has a huge signal. I had to work him with the attenuators on while I was down in KY. After a little while in EN60 it was starting to get dark, and I was nearly exhausted, so I took everything down and pointed the Rover Ranger back to the south.

I had intended to make a couple more quick stops while passing through EM79 and EM78, but by the time I reached the EM79 area, I was so tired that I stopped just long enough to work some of the locals on 6 and 2 FM. And did the same when I passed into EM78. I appologize if anyone was looking for me in those grids, but I was just too tired to raise the antennas:-)

So that's it. I just finished putting all of the FM QSO's in the log. I also discovered I had forgotten to set the date and time on the laptop, so I had to correct that as well, yuch... So here is the bottom line:

³ 50 MHz ³ 58 ³ 1 ³ 58 ³ 17 ³ 986 ³ 3 144 MHz ³ 68 ³ 1 ³ 68 ³ 15 ³ 1020 ³ 3 222 MHz ³ 0 ³ 2 ³ 0 ³ 0 ³ 0 ³ 432MHz 25 ³ 2 ³ 50 ³ 9 ³ 450 ³Grids Activated--Rovers Only ³ 9 ³ 3 ³ 3 TOTAL ³ 151 ³000000³
176 ³ 50 ³ 8800 ³Claimed score

In 700 miles, that is about 12.57 pts/mile. Anyone care for a pts/mile competition??:-)

Not great, but not bad. Considering small antennas, low power on 432, and not much in the way of propagation. Plus, I beat my former personal best score by about 1000 points, so I made my goal. Next time, 5 digits:-)

I have a whole list of station improvements that need made. The biggest of which is better antennas. I've got some ideas for 6, but instead of homebrew for 2 I think I will likely try to find something like a 2m9ssb.

I also want to look into finding some better operating spots in EM77, EM67, EN60, and may look into heading on up to EN61 and EN71....

And next time, I will stick to my schedule. I will stick to my schedule. I will stick to my schedule. I will stick to my schedule. I will stick to my schedule.

73 all, and I hope you had as much fun as I did. Dan -- *N9RLA*

N0LL -- Jun 29, 2002 20:52 ET

This ARRL VHF contest was something like my 83rd consecutive. June contests always offer a hope for E skip which can be a contest neutralizer to all the population other parts of the country have. Not much Es this year however. This years June contest was about one week or more to early for best conditions. The weekend this year was a windy and dry one so the noise level was a challenge. Thanks to N0DQS/R and KB0QGT/R and others for their extra efforts. -- *N0LL*

KT1VT/R -- Jun 25, 2002 20:08 ET



The KT1VT Rovervan on Mt. Kearsarge in FN43.

My 12-year old son (unlicensed) and I roved together for the first time, and we had a great time! We made a few mistakes, and learned a lot about roving in New England. We got a late start on Saturday, and didn't get to our first stop on Mt. Kearsarge (FN43) until 15 minutes into the contest. By the time we got everything set up, it was already 1900Z (mistake #1 - get going on time!). Contacts came quickly, though, except on 6M, where every QSO seemed to be a struggle. After an hour I finally figured out that I had never switched 6M on my FT-817 to the rear, instead of front, antenna port - so we were using the 2M brick and antenna on 6M! Once that was fixed, 6M became much easier! Mistake #2 - double check *everything*!

Because we had a commitment to be at my brother-in-law's house around 8pm Saturday evening, and because of our late start, we had to skip our next planned stop in FN42 and drive straight through to FN41. At that point we weren't set up to operate while driving so we didn't make any contacts for about 2 hours (mistake #3 - always be able to operate on some band, some mode, while mobile!).

Once in FN41, my brother-in-law and I drove out to a Boy Scout campout that was going on at a favorable radio site. For the next couple hours I was able to contest and demo Ham Radio for several older scouts and adults. I couldn't believe the number of questions I answered between (and during!) QSO's! It was a blast, though.

Sunday morning found us prospecting for sites in FN31 - nothing panned out until late morning, though. Mistake #4 - don't do site surveys *during* the contest! The last site we tried in FN31 was surprisingly good, and we made a number of nice contacts, including Stephen's first contest QSO ever (he finally got the courage up!). There was a bit of tropo going on, I think, because K8GP was very loud on 2M and we worked easily with our 100W and 2el Moxon on 2M. We tried 432, and I could just hear them calling us but we weren't able to complete.

Leaving FN31 we set up for mobile operation on 6M with the '817 barefoot and used the 5/8 wave 2M vertical as the antenna. Managed to work a couple Q's in FN32 while mobile, but the poor antenna and only 5W was not enough to raise anyone from FN33, not even W2SZ. Time was running short for us, so we kept on driving for home in FN34, where we managed a couple more quick contacts on 6 & 2M for our last grid activated.

All in all, it was a lot of fun, and we'll be back in September for another go! -- *KT1VT*

VE2ZP -- Jun 23, 2002 00:47 ET



The station

Alan VA2ADB and Dave VE2ZP decided to try hilltopping for this contest, operating as a Limited Multi-op from Huron Lookoff in Gatineau Park, north of Ottawa. From this vantage point, roughly 800ft higher than our normal locations, we thought we might be able to make a much better score than we had ever done before.

We set up in two cars at the lookoff, which affords an excellent view to the east, south and west, and little obstruction in any other direction. We brought up yagis or a quaqi for the four lowest VHF bands, popped them up on short masts right at edge of a cliff and turned the antennas by hand or with ropes. Being a tourist spot, we fully expected to answer a lot of questions and we were not disappointed. We may have even recruited a new ham.



Alan VA2ADB operating 6m and 70cm



Dave VE2ZP operating 2m and 135cm

Alan operated 6m and 70cm from one car, Dave was on 2m and 135cm in the other, and we tried to pass QSOs and multipliers from band to band, coordinating on 2mFM HTs. We operated the first day until well after dark. When things seemed to die down, we took the antennas down, but left them on site, anticipating that we would be back early enough on Sunday morning that they would not come to anyone's notice.

We had forgotten (or never knew) that the only road to our site is closed Sunday mornings for the exclusive use of cyclists. We finally got back on site a little after noon on Sunday to find our antennas unmolested. Within minutes, we were back on the air. We continued into the late afternoon, finally succumbing to the white noise. We had to turn everything down and were on our way back home by about 6pm.

Ever since I first tried VHF contesting a few years ago, I have been complaining about people refusing to point their beams to Ottawa. I thought that from the hilltop, things would be much different. They were. Now we could hear many more people from much greater distances who refused to point their beams to Ottawa. I continue to whinge.

We got very little 6m Es, and almost no tropo on the higher bands. Our best DX on each band was: On 6m - W5GAD in EL49 2200km; on 2m - K8GP or W4IY, both in FM08 820km; on 135cm - K8GP or W4IY, both in FM08 820km; and on 70cm - 432 K3YTL in FN11 440km.

Our 141 QSOs and 67 multipliers worked out to 12,194 points. It's not much of a score, but we did better than we have ever done before. -- VE2ZP

K0IP -- Jun 20, 2002 21:43 ET

COLD, below freezing weather, SNOW.. Sorry to report, 6 meters never really opened. From



Picture says it all !!

just about 7500 feet DN32, almost froze.. Will remember this one for years to come. -- *KOIP*

WA2IID/R -- Jun 20, 2002 12:07 ET



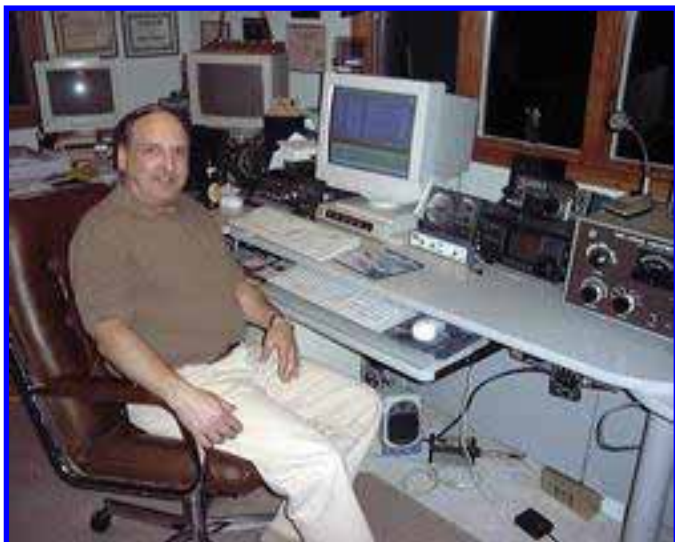
Sunset on Sunday from Ice Caves Mountain FN21tq

Jack (WA2IID) and Tom (KB2SSS) went Roving to 6 Grids in ENY. Weather and views were spectacular (See the photo attached at sundown Sunday). Contest activity seemed high with lots of NE stations on the air. Not much in the way of openings, but it looks like many of the improvements we made this year really paid off and we were very satisfied with our Hudson Division score of over 59K points. No major disasters, only equipment problem was the loss of the 6 meter preamp, and since we hear better than the DX hears us with pileups, that was not much loss. A great time was had. For more details and pictures, see our web site <http://frontiernet.net/~ihi>

73 Jack WA2IID -- *WA2IID*

N2BJ -- Jun 18, 2002 19:53 ET

We were leaving early Sunday AM for our 32nd Wedding Anniversary celebration in Hawaii so



only operated a few hours Saturday afternoon before packing! -- *N2BJ*



N2BJ Tower #1 All antennas thru 2304MHz

KA6T -- Jun 18, 2002 14:53 ET

After living in apartments for a few years and doing some roving during the contests, we're now in a house here in Portland, Oregon (CN85). Being on a smallish hillside lot, I managed to put up a Cushcraft ASL670 log periodic behind the observation deck in back of the house and tried it out during the contest, netting 84 QSOs on 50, 144, 222 and 432 MHz. I'd be more competitive if there was an "all band, single antenna" category like there is for tribanders on HF. ;-)
Regardless of the score, it was great fun.

My next ham project is to get up an antenna for 1.2 Gig as nobody could hear my signal on that band when I ran out to the car and fired up the mobile rig from the driveway. -- *KA6T*



The new log periodic, pointing east.
Fortunately, there's only one land grid to the west from here before the ocean.

K8DOG/R -- Jun 17, 2002 22:34 ET



GREAT CONETST AND RAN INTO SOME REALLY GOOD OPENINGS SAT. NIGHT. EVEN WORKED K8GP ON 4 BANDS FROM WALKERVILLE, MI. WILL HAVE TO FINE TUNE OUR LOCATIONS AND TIME TABLE ON THE NEXT TRIP BUT REALLY ENJOY ACTIVATING 8 GRIDS. 903 AND 1296 WERE REALLY A GREAT ADDITION.
-- K8DOG

K8DOG/R

K2QO -- Jun 17, 2002 12:52 ET

My QRP portable operation gets a little better with each contest. This time out I used a larger WA5JVB 11-el Yagi for 432 and an 8-el Cubex quad on 2M. Both boosted my signal over smaller units in previous attempts. The rig was my Yaesu FT-817 at full power (4-5W). A borrowed 222FM rig and small beam netted me only 3 contacts. Many ops told me that they did not have 222FM, only SSB/CW. It is obviously time to buy/build a 222 transverter!

My locations was on a hilltop in FN02nu, S-E of Attica, NY. Very nice site but there was poor



K2QO Rendezvous at Sunset

line of sight to the south. With clear weather you can see Buffalo, Rochester and maybe Toronto on a really good day.

For me, the VHF+ contests are the most fun events of the year. Before the log is sent in I am already working on my setup for the next one! It is time to look forward to the CQ VHF, ARRL UHF and the next real biggie, the ARRL September QSO party. See you all then.

72/73, Mark -- *K2QO*

AB0TX -- Jun 17, 2002 00:57 ET

I headed out at 12:00 so that I would be in the best possible position in EM17 as the Contest started. First stop was the gas station to top off the fuel cans that would run the 12 volt generator to charge the batteries when the truck was not running. With gas in cans and weeks of planning and preparation behind me, I was sure I was ready to run for 24 hours of run and gun contest. Murphy rears his ugly head! It was half way to the first site that I realized I had not purchased anything to drink and the cooler had no ice which I was supposed to pick up at the first stop. I figured I would live so I continued on. A funny thing happened at the first site. I raised the antennas and began to listen to 6 meters. Low in the noise I could hear stations to the East calling CQ! Eastern seaboard to be exact. I had my contest headphones with boom mike on and I quickly pulled them off and jumped into the back of the bed of the truck and turned the antennas to the East. When I got back into the truck, stations from the East coast were booming in here in the midwest. I was so excited that I put my headset back on and grabbed the microphone (which was not connected to the radio because I was using the CW keyer to key the radio) and tried to answer some of the stations. It took about three tries before I finally realized what I was doing and felt pretty stupid. I quickly corrected the problem and went on to work the rest of the contest error free. Gary Gerber (KB0HH) and Steve (K0UO) helped me find a spot where four grids came together in Manchester Oklahoma. I didn't so much as get everything set up when a rough thunderstorm came through and dropped rain, high wind, and lightning right on me. I really didn't want to get out and grab onto a lightening rod at the highest point around so I turned off the radio and rode out the storm. I made a few good contacts, so I packed up and headed west for the remaining contest and had superb weather until the trip home through Western Kansas where I fought a 45 mile an hour cross wind. All in all, I had a great time and look forward to the next contest and maybe take along a few more bands, and ice! I activated six different grids on six and two meters. EM17, EM16, EM07, EM06, DM86, and DM97. I was running an Icom IC-746 with 100 watts output on 2 and 6 meters. Antennas were a Cushcraft 13B2 and a four element Comet 6 meter beam mounted on a 16 foot telescoping pole. CQ

K9AKS -- Jun 16, 2002 11:19 ET



Inside the Van

I made the last minute decision to go to Iowa, rather than to Belmont Mound in Wisconsin (where I had been the last two years) to operate Single Op QRP Portable from EN42. After driving around for a couple of hours, I stumbled onto a new housing development on the Mississippi River bluff a few miles north of Dubuque, Iowa. It is a subdivision with very large lots (selling for well over 100,000 bucks each) and some new multi-million dollar "McMansions." I ran into the developer who gave me permission to sit on her un-occupied lot at the top of the development. The site afforded good views in all directions and a spectacular view of the river itself for a few miles upstream and at least ten miles downstream. The photo shows a view to the southeast (the antennas are pointed east).

Because it was dark by the time I was settled, I waited until Saturday morning to put up the tower and antennas, and was ready well before the contest started. The weather was great all

weekend. I used an IC 746 for 50 and 144 MHz, and an FT 736 for 222, 432, and 1296, held down ten watts on all bands. Everything worked fine, except I had trouble with the rotator binding in the southwest direction, for which I could find only a temporary solution (shake the tower). Late Saturday, I made the decision to avoid the South to West quadrant, thereby cutting off several grids that I otherwise would have worked.

Highlights included: I worked Kentucky and Tennessee on two meters the night before, but not during, the contest. During the contest, we had three modest six meter openings: to the southeast, to Texas, and to the northwest (late in the contest). These provided fewer contacts than I would like, but a pretty good grid-to-QSO ratio. Many SSB stations responded quickly to my weak CW signals. I ended up with 112 QSOs and 63 grids on six. On Saturday, I was hearing 2s and 3s on two meters from mid-afternoon on, but was able to work only one of them with my ten watts. Conditions were pretty good into Michigan and Ohio and I completed four-band QSOs with several people out there. I appreciate all the good operators who were able to pull out my weak signals. Rovers helped my score, especially the dynamic duo of K0PG and

K9ILT.

My 65,685 points (316 QSOs and 151 Grids on five bands) is higher than the existing Midwest Division record, and is my personal best. Congratulations to K9PW who broke the all-time June QRP Portable record, which had stood since 1988. 73 -- K9AKS

AA2UK -- Jun 15, 2002 20:50 ET



What a terrific contest! Conditions were excellent up and down the east coast. I worked Bernie in FN63 on 432 and he was only running 5 watts. The thrill was working K0MQS EN31 to FM29 actually rag chewed for about 10 minutes he was 5X9 on 2 meters! Working W1LP/MM in FM24 and 23 on all the bands Clint had. My personal best contest ever. 73 and see you all in the next Test! Bill UK -- AA2UK

My large tower. The upper array is 6,2 and 222 the lower array is 432 thru 10ghz.

VE7HPS -- Jun 15, 2002 18:46 ET



had a great time working the contest from cn99. although i couldn't make it to the 1600m asl ride i was hoping for, parking at 1180m mark just where the road was blocked by a three foot snow drift seemed to work not so bad. -- VE7HPS



W2SZ/1 -- Jun 15, 2002 09:36 ET

It was really spectacular to hear extended tropo on 144 thru 2304 in June AND sporadic E on six all at the same time. Made for a very exciting experience for everyone, and a new June record for us at W2SZ/1! Thanks to all. -- *K1DH*

WB5VYE/R -- Jun 14, 2002 23:24 ET

This Rove posed some new opportunities. The Van-Gough managed the 580 miles and grids EM12,13,03,02,01,11, and 21. The laptop 'died' an unexpected death. It was something about a data I/O error, *&%\$@#. I started a paper trail after the p/c crash, then, the atomic clock went belly up. (that heat thing again) I put the clock in the ice chest, but, the damage was done. Heat was definitely a factor on this trip. Txverters were off frequency a bit. Th' Van-Gough vapor locked in East Texas. After removing the doghouse, installing some aluminum foil around the fuel line, I was on the rove again. It looks as though I need to give the Gough and radio components some care before I Rove again. While finishing th' test in em-12, the FT-736R died. Ohwell. I think next summer, Th' 'Rove' will be further North. What is the grid square for Alaska?

<http://www.k5rmg.org/wb5vye.html> (Past roves and pictures) -- *WB5VYE*

W4/ON1CFX/R -- Jun 16, 2002 11:56 ET

Short rover session this time. Wanted to start in Cacapon state park near Winchester, VA but did not make it there in time, so decided to camp somewhere in the FM09 valley, near the Shenandoah. FM08us was next and surprisingly quiet - only met 1 rover station. Sunset was great. Had to call it a day around 11pm, only to start at 4pm Sunday on the other Hogback Mountain near Leesburg FM19ec. The top has a friendly OM (app 700 ft) with some nice LOS into DC. Activated the 10GHz for the first time in the contest with K1RZ. FM18hw was next for the last 3 hours of the contest. Overall, great fun with lots of activity - think I have reached some



QSL card material

of the limitations of my roving approach, given I rebuild the station from scratch at every location (most elementary run-and-gun approach (yes it is a rental)), with 3 large antennas and a 10GHz dish, and flying solo a lot of time is lost. Results were a bit less than last September, with app 200 qsos and 44 grids, for a total of 13k points. Propagation was not as good as last time. Thank you all for listening to the most annoying callsign in the contest - again. 73 de xtof W4/ON1CFX/R. -- *ON1CFX*

K0NR -- Jun 15, 2002 22:03 ET



Portable operation using drive-on mount.

For the June contest, operated Single Op Portable from a high spot in the Rampart Range at 9300 feet (DM79). Local activity (including several rovers) was good on Saturday, slower on Sunday. On Sunday, 6 Meters seemed to always be just on the verge of opening up --- good enough to make some contacts but not very exciting. -- *K0NR*

N2JMH/R -- Jun 14, 2002 21:38 ET

We decided to try a few different grids for this contest and actually visiting the sites before the contest we decided on starting out in FN00 and FN10. We still did not have a decent location in FN01 so we only operated while mobile on our way to FN11, another new site for us.

Sunday morning we were setup in FN12 south of Hornell by 8am at yet another different site for



FN10 with the antennas pointing west

us. We had never scouted this one before but it played out well and will probably be a regular stop for us. We finished the day out in some of our usual spots in FN02, FN03 and FN13.

Overall we had a good time with slightly better than average band conditions and excellent weather. The list of broken equipment was small for this trip but losing 432 did hurt our score alot.

Work you next time, Jim n2jmh/r -- *N2JMH*



The new FN12 location



We don't need no stinkin antenna spacing

N1MU/R -- Jun 14, 2002 14:43 ET



The new 10 GHz transverter

Greetings from the N1MU/R team: Tom, N1MU and Mark, W2FE. This contest was really great. It was our first time with our new 10 GHz setup.

We drove around 1000 miles around Lake Ontario from Rochester, through Toronto, up to Ottawa, down to Long Sault, ON (across the St. Lawrence from Massena, NY), through Watertown, NY, Syracuse, NY and finally over to Pompey Hill, NY and Cazenovia, NY. We visited FN03, FN04, FN15, FN25, FN24, FN14, FN13, FN12, and FN22 and ran 50 MHz through 10 GHz.

Mark operates from the front seat and uses an Icom 746 for 100 W on 6m and 2m and a Radio Shack HTX-100 with a DEMI transverter for 25 W on 222. From the back seat, Tom uses an Icom 706 for 100 W on 432 and as an IF radio for 903 through 10 GHz with homebrew transverters. We run a KB6KQ Halo on 6m, a 4-element 2m beam, 222 and 432 Yagis. A single dish is used for 903 through 10 GHz with three different feeds, and we run from 4 to 18 W on the microwave bands. The dish is scrap from a US Navy Phalanx Close-in Weapon System

(CWIS).

We logged with RoverLog running networked with and Ethernet crossover cable. -- *N1MU*



N1MU/R Parked at the Lion Motel, Long Sault, ON



Tom's operating position in the back seat



Mark's operating position in the front seat



EM75 Cherohala Parkway Elevation 5377



The Turbo Rover. My wife is still getting over this...Note the idiot proof coax shields.

This was my first attempt at roving and I planned to operate from 5 grids. I downsized my old portable station from an Astro van and 2 sixty foot towers to a Saab 9-3 and a single 22 ft mast. My XYL, N4PXQ, was not excited when I ripped out all the leather seats from the family sedan and installed 5 wattmeters and an operating console.

The rig was a new TS-2000 barefoot on 6, 150 watts on 2, 220, and 432. DEMs xverters and 50 watts on 903/1296 and 15 watts on 2304. The TS-2000 is a great IF rig (outside of being deaf on 50 mhz).

GPS and GIS systems made it easy to locate 2 sites, one at 5300 asl in North Carolina (EM 75-85) and another at 2800 asl in Kentucky (EM86-87) that each had 2 grids accessible within a quarter of a mile of each other. My son, N4QCR, designed a program to locate the sites. The final site in EM 76 at elevation 2600 feet was easily accessible on the way home from Kentucky.

The wx forecast was perfect and I got an early start on Saturday morning. I set up on a National Forest Parkway without incident. Unfortunately the mountaintop location was not exceptional. Conditions were average and degraded to poor by 7pm Saturday night. I barely had 150 Q in two different grids, I either had a blown 6 meter preamp or the e skip never reached my mountaintop. I dismantled the antennas and headed home for 4 hours sleep before making the last 2.5 hour drive to the Kentucky sites.

The weather was even better on Sunday and my operating position was in the shade. The cliff



EM87 Near Hazard, Ky Elevation 2800

that I was perched on had almost a 900 ft shear drop and the views were spectacular. I was able to set the antennas up within 2 feet of the edge, and the takeoff angle really played on 903-2304. Again, the conditions were only average in the morning and there was good enhancement to the northwest on Sunday afternoon on the UHF and microwave bands. Six was again a disappointment as I listened to K8LEE chugging along at 100 Q/hr. No contacts from K8GP above 432 was another blow...

By 5 pm everything had dried up and I lost my enthusiasm. I skipped my last grid and arrived home at 10:30 pm. A pretty mediocre effort, but I learned that my antennas must be deployable a lot faster and I need to have a better 6 meter signal... -- *N8UM*

KF6KDA -- Jun 13, 2002 15:55 ET

Myself (KF6KDA) and two other ops (KE6ZAK and KE6EEZ) operated from DM06 in central California as a limited multi-op station. Kinda slow for a June contest. We lost our TS-2000 early Sunday morning, but had a xtra 706mkIIg to replace the TS-2000. Overall got about 200 q's and prolly 40 grids total or so, but we were not using a computer for logging so I'm sure some of those will be dupe'd out. Not bad, but a nice 6m opening would have made it much much better. Hope September will be more active here.

****NOTE:** Thanks to the rovers that came through the valley that helped tremendously!!
THANKS GUYS!

****NOTE:** Thanks to N6SGW for the use of his station !! Thanks Keith!

Michael KF6KDA -- *KF6KDA*

W3IY/R -- Jun 13, 2002 13:01 ET

The microwave activity keeps growing, and operating as a rover in the contests is getting to be more fun than ever.

We had a great time in the contest, to say the least. Thanks to all who got on, especially the guys who kept me awake all nite running the bands from the Va Beach area (FM16,17,27). It was



W3IY/R Battle Jitney

awesome.

Condx were poor at the start in FM15. The 20kt winds from the subsiding northeaster in NC were taking a toll on propagation. A few Es QSOs on 6 were fun, but short-lived. K4EFD showed up from the mtns in FM07 and blew my socks off on all bands thru 10G...vy loud! We deviated significantly from plans since wrestling up the big antenna telescoping mast was hard labor in the winds...I was reluctant to take it down too quickly.



Blue Ridge Sunset W3IY/R de W3IP

FM25 was also below average from stormy propagation condx. By the time we got to FM26, the wx was getting calm, and the coastal ducting became highly apparent from the waterfront site. I had a blast working K1TEO, K1UHF etc S9 SSB on 10G! This propagation continued all nite thru FM16,17, es FM27. AA2UK, K2SMN, K1GX, es others kept us hopping. Tnx guys!!

We missed most of our schedules, as it's just not a good idea to break off a band run with a station, after finally getting the microwave antennas properly trained. This contest

convinced me more than before that schedules are bad for rovers. I think the best answer is for rovers and stations seeking rovers to put a separate 2m rx es antenna up, and monitor a prearranged freq.

Worked lots of stations on the lower 4 bands in-flight...great fun, but as I got tired, I slacked off on this for safety reasons. Working guys is easy, but logging becomes tedious and dangerous while flying solo.

Had a good site in FM28, but as usual, we didn't find all the stations we were hoping for. had good microwave runs from here with K1RZ, N3NGE, etc.

The FM18 site near Cambridge, MD was unexpectedly filled with 3000+ joggers doing a benefit run for some better cause, so we left them to their resources, and never stopped in this grid. I wanted to stop in FM18 on the east side of the bay, but the off-ramp access to the bay has gotten too complex...you gotta plan 10-miles ahead.

FM29aa had a good take-off angle in the corn fields, but again, missed most of the expected stations, even though we made noise on 144.247 alot. W3CCX was much louder from here, es we got them thru 5.7G FB.

Usually we operate from the Chesapeake bay bridge, but the sleep deprivation and beach traffic required too much attention after the all-nighter, so we just listened for the most part, and stayed out of trouble. It was awesome working K1RZ es K3DNE thru 2.3G mobile on tree scatter, after leaving the bridge. They sounded like Au at 55 mph!

Lots of mobile ops en route to FM19ha, where we stopped for 90min. It was great running bands here with K9OYD/R es W4RX. Worked W4RX on 24G with LOUD sigs hr, which was awesome.

Then on to FM08us at 3350ft. Great site, but we got so busy running locals, we never cashed in es gathered the needed grids to the west. More looper repairs due to low hanging tree parts on skyline drive. Lots of microwave QSOs with stations in the DC area. Made another 24G QSO hr w/W4RX. Even made some rover-to-rover QSOs from here...a rare treat!

Made multiple looper repairs due to errant trees. Lost the AC compressor in FM18 (it's gonna be a long hot summer in the Intergalactic Roving Battle Jitney). New DC power system worked great.

Totals 812 QSOs in 146 grids~~ 253K (unchecked at this point)

Great contest~ tnx fer all the activity! CU on the bands. 73, Bill W3IY/R -- W3IY

N7ROJ/R -- Jun 13, 2002 20:39 ET



What a great contest! 222 and 2304 were awesome. Just wish that we could have gotten some band openings. This was my second contest as a rover and my first time with a partner. KB7UEA endured the 938 miles with me like a real trooper. -- N7ROJ

The N7ROJ/R mobile. Even with the winds and the miles it all stays up and working that way. Notice the awesome 432 dual yagi holder. Custom!

AA2YG -- Jun 12, 2002 14:24 ET



The forecast for the weekend looked promising and all of the equipment was being loaded into my 1989 F150. The equipment consisted of 2 Icom 706s an amplifier for 2 and 432 a 5500 watt generator We planned to be active on 6, 2 and 432. The 3 element 6 meter antenna is mounted on the surplus military crank up tower (which has been modified to bolt directly to the bed of the truck thanks to my local welding shop) and lashed down with bungies it can actually be used as we are driving down the road! The 2 meter Cushcraft 13B2 and the 16 element 432 antenna are attached to the mast and then attached to a homemade wooden rack on the side of the truck. This allows us to set up in less than 30 minutes. All coax is attached to the antennas all that needs to be done is to attach them to the radios when we arrive. The 432 antenna can also be used mobile however the 13b2 cannot be used for 2 reasons (to mount properly to the truck it has to be polarized vertically and the front of the beam is very close to the roof of the truck) On friday night before the contest Lu and I made all the final adjustments and made sure we had everything we needed past experience taught us to bring extra everything if possible (Especially Coax and Jumpers!!) Everything looked good to go all we lacked was installing the seperation cables and Lus radio we decided to finish up on saturday morning. I was up bright and early and installed the remaining equipment checked swr on the 6 meter antenna looked great. Lu arrived around 10:30 Am we decided to leave at 11:00 so we would be set up in time. It is an hour drive



to Mount Untrysynthia which comes in at about 3400 feet ASL. We left at exactly 11:00 am and proceeded to the mountain we were set up at exactly 1:50 PM everything looked good to go. we decided to stay at this spot for the day and then decided to hit 3 grids on Sunday. We ended up making 103 contacts from FN22 with one contact on 6 meters to EM12 near Dallas Texas. We packed up around 7:30 PM and decided to get a nights sleep. Sunday we left around 11:30 AM and went to a location near Remsen NY in FN23 we had very good

conditions there and worked a lot of stations. We broke down at around 3:30 PM and then went mobile thru FN13 we only needed 1 contact to activate the grid and thanks to W2SWZ/1 we got it. We then proceeded to a location in FN12 near Cortland Ny and remained there the remainder of the contest with great conditions there our location came in at about 1800 feet. in all we ended up with 216 contacts with a score of 17,420 Points. -- AA2YG

K2DRH -- Jun 12, 2002 13:15 ET



Was limited to 6M on 5el at 18' after my rotor controller took a lightning hit and caused the motor to run-on past the limits ripping out all the rotor loops on tuesday before the contest. Still had some fun with 72 Qs in 52 grids. Amazing how much you can do with very little when the band's open! Too bad it wasn't open very much. -- K2DRH EN41

What should have been K2DRH EN41 if not for lightning ...



K2DRH antennas ... but no rotor loops!

K7MDL/R -- Jun 12, 2002 04:46 ET



UpperLeft: KD7OJP working the bands - Upper Right: K7MDL Rover Rig at Green Mtn. (CN98) - Lower Left: K7MDL Rover Crew - Lower Right: K7MDL Rover Rig in CN86

Here is the K7MDL Rover Report:

Started 2 hours late. My son CJ, KD7OJP, was co-pilot. Went to Petermen Hill in CN86 (2750ft.) until Richard, N7VWJ, arrived in the late afternoon. Great spot. Attempted to run to CN85/Portland through CN96. The forest road on the back side of Mt. St. Helens was blocked halfway at the National Park viewpoint turnoff and had to turn back and abandon CN85 and all grids South. 6M opened up but I was in deep mountain valley shielding all RF. Logged elk and deer sightings to pass the time while we doubled back.

After a strategy debate at 9pm, we made for Yakima in Eastern Washington via White Pass on Hwy 12 (CN96) arriving 12:00am Sunday

morning where we got some food and gas. Stopped at Ellensburg viewpoint for a few nap hours. No useful radio contact from 7pm Saturday to 6:30am on Sunday except for a brief White Pass session (4600ft).

Proceeded to Frenchman Hills in DN06/07/Cn96/CN97 grid corner. Worked a few Canadian stations on 6M and 2M.

Proceeded to Seattle via I-90 (CN96,97,87). Worked some stations on the way including a brief 6M opening around noon. Went to Clearview (CN87). Ran into the N7WLO porcupine vehicle

in the parking lot. Moved to Lake Stevens (CN88). Finished on Green Mtn. (CN98) North of Mt. Pilchuck at 2800ft. On Green Mtn. snow blocked access to the top so the rock wall on my back side was a great 6M DX filter. Could not hear a soul from the east. Great view to the South, West, and Northwest though so we missed both evening 6M openings to the east.

Ended up with about 21,000 points for those who are counting. Activated 8 grids, worked 45, 323 QSOs on 6M, 2M, and 432. January I totaled 1300 points. Certainly an improvement - despite the 12 hour outage! I was consistent on one item in both contests though - I missed the 6M DX openings again (save 3 or 4 morning contacts).

73s

-- *K7MDL*

KC0LMS -- Jun 10, 2002 16:31 ET



My humble shack!

This was my second contest and the first from my QTH in Minneapolis. I was active on 6,2,220 FM and 432 I had a great time working from home and from an apartment building too! I worked many new grids on 6 and 432 with my new antennas! I surpassed my goal of 5000 pts by 900pts which was great. Thanks to all who came back to the KC0LastManStanding on ten watts on six meters. I'm hooked for good now the insanity as my wife says has me in its grip! HI 73 and see you on the bands! Russ -- *KC0LMS*

NL7CO -- Jun 10, 2002 22:44 ET

As a 2m only contester, the flat 6m band did not bother me much other than a little more congestion from the locals. Finally tied my previous best 2m QSO total (119) in the last hour, but never cracked the 30 grid mark. All in all, I was at or above my contesting averages in all three areas (QSO's, grids, total score). Looking to improve the antenna system for September.

-- *NL7CO*

WH6LR -- Jun 10, 2002 19:28 ET

Boy the bands were not in to good of a condition but I managed. I hope everyone had fun. US here in EM04 had fun. I did work one new state on 6m and one new grid on 2m so the contest was not a total lost.

73's de Jim WH6LR EM04 -- *WH6LR*

K0AWU -- Jun 10, 2002 11:33 ET

Thanks to all who looked toward EN37ed during the contest. Returning to 6 meters after being gone for over 30 years made this contest very different. I now have a new problem! Do I work FROM 6 meters as a "base" band or 2 meters? We had enough 6 meter E's here to require monitoring 6 all the time. 160 six meter contacts into 75 grids helped boost my contest score to a new personal high of 29,318pts with 234 contacts on 6m, 2m, 432Mhz and 1296Mhz. Tropo conditions were poor Sunday with thunderstorms and a frontal passage that really hurt 2, 432 and 1296. But an almost 2hr opening into "7" land on six meters, provided a last hour burst of 18 new grids! As always, the contest was a real Blast! -- *K0AWU*

N5QYC -- Jun 10, 2002 11:15 ET



Me (N5QYC) in the shack

Wow! The bands where either up or down with the hunt for contacts making life interesting. Had a great time, and beat my previous scores by a factor of three. Between dodging thunder heads, rain, and lightning and working only three bands my scores were greater then in previous contests. I even had a guest visit during the contest and now has been bitten by the contest bug. Goes to show you that you don't have to be a "Big Gun" to have fun during the VHF/UHF contests.

73,

Joe Puett N5QYC Arkansas Section Grid: EM36
-- *N5QYC*



N5QYC Antenna Farm

AA1YN -- Jun 10, 2002 10:30 ET



The shack

For the June VHF contest, I decided to make it up to 1296, so starting in November 2001, I built a DSP-10 transceiver and bought a 1296 transverter from DEMI along with a 55-ele loop yagi from Directive Systems. Finally, 2 weeks prior to the contest, I was able to make my first 1296 contact with 3 watts to keep the minimum 1 improvement per VHF contest going. I also managed to build a station controller for my transverters to aid in switching bands rapidly. All seems set until the week prior, a thunderstorm moves through the area and decides to re-adjust my 432 antenna's azimuth by 20 degrees. The problem is, it's the top antenna on a 16' mast! With a little ingenuity and lots of safety in mind, the problem gets fixed 3 days prior to the contest. The cause - loose bolts holding the antenna to the mast. In fact, many bolts had loosened during the past 6 months so I tightened all bolts on all antennas and will plan to check them again next year.



I created an Excel data file with a compilation of all the VHF stations I've worked along with all the northeast stations who submitted results in the past 5 VHF contests with a list of their

**The antennas, 432,6,2,222,1296 and 1296
transverter in white box**

station capabilities and 6 digit grid location and calculated their bearing/reverse bearing and distance. I prep'd the TacLog program for my

five bands (ABCDE) and practiced log entries. I've been practicing Morse Code to be able to copy though I'll admit it is very difficult for me but I'm going to try. It's now Friday and the 24-hour countdown has begun. Am looking forward to the event. I did a respectable showing in the Sept contest (my first) with a score of 10,860 and don't think I did too bad in the January contest with a score of around 13K and have set a goal of a minimum 20K points for the June contest. I am already making plans for adding 902 for the Sept, 2002 contest but will wait and see.

Other Preparations: I re-arranged the station with a new desk, lamp, chair, and a computer stand for the DSP-10's computer. New Pencils/pens and printed some log files for hand logs just incase I get into a pile-up - one would hope! A sufficient quantity of assorted life sustaining junk food and coffee has been stockpiled in anticipation of the event. Throat lozenges procured and physical training with the PTT switch has been ongoing for a week now.

Post Contest: After all the preparations, the equipment worked flawlessly except for the Network Interface card on my laptop. The hardest part of the contest was getting the multi-operators to work up the bands and I missed a few contacts as a result. The standard reply "We're on 1296.120 so give us a call" just doesn't seem to work. The short openings on 6 were a God send and gave me 10 additional multipliers and the bands seemed to open up a little on the higher bands for short periods. All in all, I feel I did well and fell just short of my overall goal of 20K points. While I haven't checked the logs thoroughly for wrong calls or bad contacts yet, it looks like my final score is 19,136 unless I missed a couple of multipliers. I even made 10 CW contacts! Looks like I have to add 902 for Sept. Maybe I could have passed 20K but the last hour of the contest was too much for me. One suggestion for everyone who works above 2 meters, KNOW YOUR 6 DIGIT GRID. -- AA1YN

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